

Vol 49 #6

BANDWAGON

THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2005



Helping young people
express their dreams...
and make them come true.



Photo: Al Seib. Costume: Dominique Lemaux. © 2003 Cirque du Soleil Inc. 011431

Once again, in 2006, *Cirque du Soleil*® will dedicate 1% of its annual revenue
to outreach programs targeting youth at risk

Happy Holidays!

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL



cirquedusoleil.com

Preview at www.zoppe.net

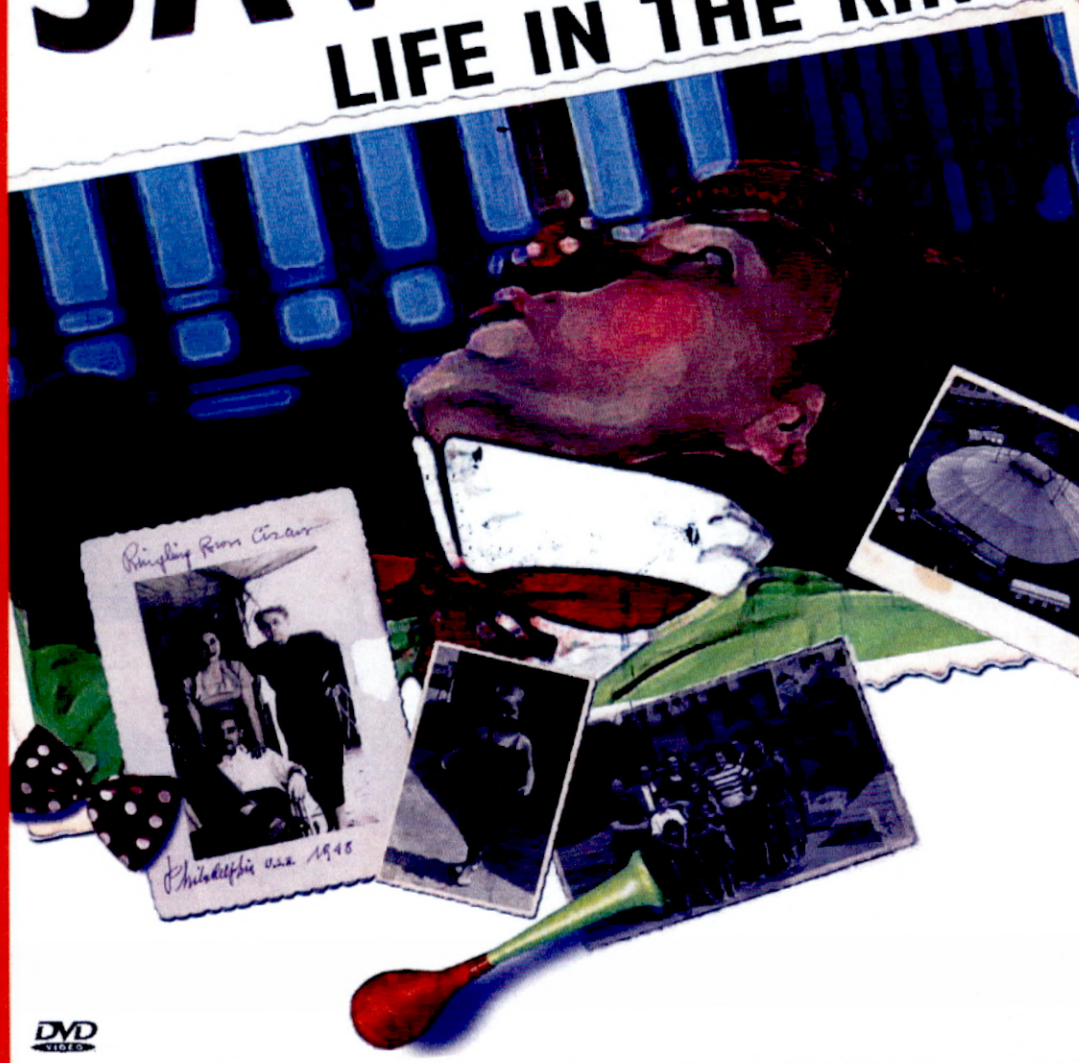
Save \$8.00 (for a limited time)

**GREAT GIFT
FOR CHILDREN OF
ALL AGES!**

A Peek Inside The Zoppé Family Circus

SAWDUST

LIFE IN THE RING



DVD
VIDEO

Don't miss this historical new film.

Order Now!

Online at www.zoppe.net or Call (512) 326-5001.



Out of the Wild West Thundered the First Circus Train of Steel

By Fred Dahlinger, Jr.

Copyright 2005 Fred Dahlinger, Jr.

Part One

Introduction

Americans of the mid-1930s witnessed a high-profile transformation in a primary form of mass transportation, the passenger trains operated by the nation's railroads. The year 1934 was the dawn of the streamliner era, an industrial design movement that brought energy and vitality to a nationwide business that desperately needed an initiative to rejuvenate ridership and recapture the public's attention. The passenger train business was threatened by the expansion of private automobile ownership and especially corporately-owned airlines, the operations of which were partially taxpayer funded. Sleek designs and speed were the hallmarks of progress.

The circus was in similar need of

revival and to some degree experienced it in 1938, when John Ringling North commenced the comprehensive transformation of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows with contemporary stage and industrial designers. Until that time, only modest, incidental advances toward a more modern circus had been implemented. The circus industry was generally quite comfortable with its archaic technology, performance and marketing rituals. It relied upon nostalgic appeal, with cowboy movie matinee idols as featured attractions to motivate ticket buyers.

The circus business had modernized its fleets of railroad conveyances during the 1920s, replacing older

The earliest metal circus cars were unusual tubular frame vehicles constructed according to LaMothe's designs for the 1876 Barnum Circus. Author's collection

wooden trains with groups of steel cars. Mandated by the railroad requirements intended to force wooden cars into oblivion, it was an extraordinarily expensive, non-discretionary capital investment. The purchases were necessary just to remain in business. The conversion was generally unappreciated by the public. Except for the hardy souls who ventured through the early morning hours into the dangerous railroad freight yards to watch the ritualistic unloading of the trains, the modern steel cars were never seen.

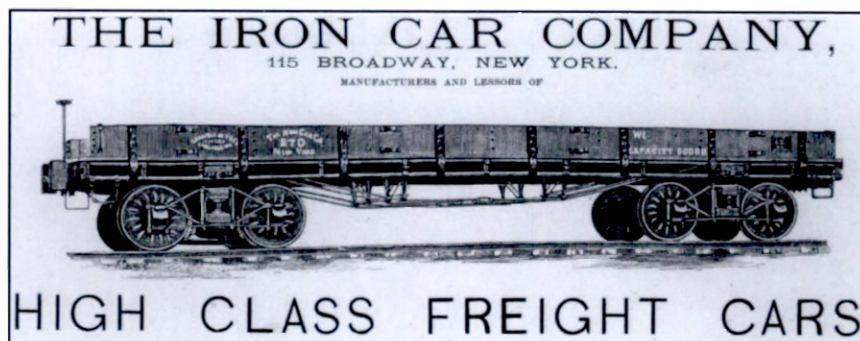
Perhaps it was this disconnect between the railroad yard and the public's knowledge that suggested to an enterprising show agent that there was a new message there, one that would bring renewed attention to the big shows. It was given the usual circus treatment and proclaimed in flaming posters as "Giant Trains of Steel Thundering Through the Dawn, Bringing You All That Is Great in the Amusement World." These aggrandized steel show trains of the 1930s were the fulfillment of a transformation that had been initiated more than two decades before.

This monograph is the story of the showmen and the events that led to the development of the first steel circus train that rumbled across America. Rooted in the advancing technology of the railroads, the show-related part of the story starts with the formation of the first Wild West exhibition; flows through transitions between partners; continues during changes in circus leadership; and finally takes place during the rise of the largest Wild West outfit to ever tour America.

These monstrous steel cars conveyed the exotic, spectacular and grand circus entertainments that fired the imaginations and expectations of the people who anxiously awaited their arrival. Their cargo provided Americans with momentary escape from the difficult days of the Great Depression.

Steel and America

The decade of 1900-1910 defined a world in which America assumed an





The "Smoky City," Pittsburgh, home to many steelworks, played an essential role in the development of circus trains. Author's collection.

ever greater role, one that often manifested itself in terms of science and applied technology. This knowledge was used to explain the natural world; to conquer the new frontiers that had replaced "the West;" to harness new forms of power; and to facilitate the gigantic businesses and industries that were proliferating and creating unimaginable wealth and prosperity. Despite the rapid development of the electric power grid and the growing demand for petroleum distillates, coal-generated steam was still the king of transportation power in 1900. The material most suited to contain and control that vaporous agent of power was steel, a wondrously workable and malleable substance capable of being cast, rolled, forged and fabricated into many forms.

Steel was the premier industry of the era. When J. P. Morgan formed the United States Steel Corporation in 1901, it was the world's first billion dollar corporation. It represented the infusion of technology into the commerce of everyday life, far surpassing wood as the most important construction material in many critical applications.

America and the industrial world entered the age of steel as the result of the needs of the transportation network, the increasing population density of cities and the desire to flex military might in distant ports. Bessemer converters and open hearth furnaces, supplied with molten iron from blast furnaces, pro-

vided the raw material to the rolling mills that produced specific steel shapes. The first great demand for steel came from the railroads, which desired rolled steel rails for greater endurance, increased load carrying capacity and safety. The increase in urban population density caused ever taller buildings to be built, leading to the development of the steel skeleton skyscraper. Architectural engineering design specifications gave birth to specialized rolling mills, like the Gray mill, that produced heavy steel shapes including columns, beams, channels and so on, all necessary to frame these skyward reaching structures. Powerful governments and leaders extended their spheres of influence by building great fleets of warships that could be sent round the globe to impress friend and foe alike. The proliferation of warships fueled the construction of mills that could roll both tough armor plate and more ductile low carbon steel plates for industrial and commercial applications. The development of these various types and shapes of steel eventually made circus trains of steel a reality in the 1910s and 1920s.

The circus commenced traveling by rail, in a limited way, in the mid-1850s. Reduced scope "railroad circuses," essentially compact big top shows on leased system cars, prospered somewhat in the 1860s. It was the purchase of an entire train of specially designed railroad cars to transport P. T. Barnum's Great Traveling World's Fair in 1872 that brought the circus and the railroads together in an important union. It changed the meaning of the phrase "railroad circus" into one that encom-

passed the placement of an entire overland show, in its fully developed form, onto a set specially built railroad cars.¹ The 1870s marked the beginning of an era of gigantic enterprise in the United States, including the expansion of transportation networks, the rise of industrial concerns and the growth of metropolitan areas. The Barnum circus adoption of flat car rail operations in 1872 enabled it to satisfy the public's hunger for outdoor entertainments and as a result it ushered into existence an unsurpassed era of show expansion.

Circuses from the 1870s to the 1920s traveled on train cars made largely of wood, reinforced by metallic elements to handle the tension loads and connections that wood could not. Wood remained the material of choice for railroad cars until the arrival of the 20th century. Though the railroads adopted steel cars within a decade, with the principle of their superiority proven beyond a doubt by 1905, circuses and other outdoor shows continued in their traditional ways, as with the horse, for another decade and a half to two decades.

A few enterprising showmen took the lead and acquired cars of steel in 1911, but the remainder made the conversion in 1920s.

The geographic distribution of the raw materials necessary to make steel caused one region of America to dominate both the steel business and early steel show car manufacturing. As one might expect, western Pennsylvania, and particularly Pittsburgh, the heart of the industry, provided the home territory for the events that led to steel show cars. The first ones were ordered by an Oklahoma-based showman who wintered his show in Carnegie, a Pittsburgh suburb named for steel master Andrew Carnegie. This Wild West operator was partnered with a man born and raised in Beaver Falls, another steel-making community near Pittsburgh. The second buyer of steel cars was a carnival impresario from Pennsylvania's north-central area. The circus man who assembled the first modern circus train of steel hailed from Warren, Pennsylvania. The firm that made the first steel

cars was founded, headquartered and financed in Pittsburgh and had fabrication facilities in Butler, another steel town just 35 miles to the north. The steel that went into the manufacture of these cars could have been melted and rolled in any of Pittsburgh's numerous furnaces and mills.

The Importance of Steel Circus Trains

Railroad transportation costs and the purchase of a train of cars respectively represented the second highest daily expense and largest capital investment ever incurred by a railroad circus. Advertising was the mostly costly daily expense. To ignore them in understanding show history would be the same as avoiding a discussion of the operating expense and investment in steamships in the history of a shipping line. They're a very important aspect of understanding the story of the enterprise.

The circus was a for-profit entertainment business that entered into contracts for the goods and services that it required to conduct its affairs. Those agreements included transportation arrangements with railroads to convey its equipment, animals and people from one community to another. The railroad tariffs, which were based simply on the number of cars moved, caused shows to contract for the construction of railroad cars having special characteristics that suited their unique

The Hagenbeck-Wallace Forepaugh Sells Circus unloading on four tracks in 1935. Pfening Archives.



purposes. Essentially from the inception of show-owned trains in 1872, showmen realized that they could benefit financially by having longer than standard cars built expressly for their purposes. The fewer the number of their cars, the less costly was the expense of moving the circus from one community to another. It is important to recognize that builders manufactured those cars specifically with



The first circus train comprised of steel cars was aggrandized in this 1914 Jones Bros. & Wilson herald. Pfening Archives.

the circus needs foremost. They were not generic cars that served the purposes of the system railroads or other shippers. The situation is unlike today, when conventional railroad piggyback flats are placed into service by either Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows, or the James E. Strates Shows, a railroad carnival, the sole remaining railroad shows. Their flat cars were designed with no



The excitement of circus train arrival was captured in this great early 1920s lithograph printed by Strobridge for Ringling-Barnum. Cincinnati Art Museum.

thought given to specialized show use. That was not the case between about 1911 and 1955, when steel cars were built for circuses, Wild West exhibitions and railroad carnivals with their specific operational needs foremost in the designer's mind.

Though utilitarian, and a major show expense, when a show purchased new metal railroad cars the event was usually trumpeted loudly in the trade press as a mark of quality and accomplishment. Showmen proudly proclaimed their first steel cars as a badge of honor, considering them a mark of considerable achievement, a barometer of the progressive attitude that by association characterized their entire operation. P. T. Barnum and his Flatfoot partners, the first and only circus owners to buy circus cars fabricated from iron pipe and castings, promoted the virtues of their unique 1876 conveyances in lithographs, elaborate couriers and elsewhere. Even the circus that bought these unique Barnum show cars second hand in late 1880, John Robinson, focused public attention on the metallic conveyances in its advertising. These steps aggrandizing an element that was entirely unrelated to their core reason for public existence, the big top performance, suggests the importance of the vehicles within the mind of the showman.

J. Augustus Jones, the first circus man to exclusively have steel stock and flat cars, publicized his techno-

logical marvel on his show's handbills and perhaps in other media pieces. His 1914 Jones Bros. & Wilson's Big 3 Ring Trained Animal Shows heralds proclaimed it "the First and Only Show that Own and Travel in their Own ALL NEW STEEL TRAIN OF CARS." His contemporary, carnival operator Johnny J. Jones, an early advocate of steel cars, spoke proudly of his "Jones Steel Flyer" and always advised the trade journals whenever he had placed another order for steel show cars. He treated the arrival of individual vehicles as first-time parents would a new born. Jones was one of the claimants to having the first all steel show train, and may have deserved the mantle in the carnival business.

Despite the expensive conversions from wooden to steel car fleets during the 1920s, the circus business as a whole did not cause any public attention to be focused on its investments. By then, steel cars were an acknowledged fact for over a decade on system railroads. Public recognition of the circus industry's delay in converting would have been interpreted as a negative indicator of show progressiveness.

Except for the nondescript trains shown in the famous 1922 Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey lithograph disgorging their "Ten Thousand Wonders From Every Land," there was little attention given to the topic in circus marketing. A Ringling-Barnum 1933 Golden Jubilee litho featured similar generic railroad cars, as did a revision of the 1922 poster during the same season.²

The decade that included the introduction of high-speed streamliners awakened some allied with outdoor shows to an overlooked opportunity. It was still the era of steel and steam, technologies with which most Americans were very familiar. Those expensive, long, steel cars that transported the circus did have marketing clout that could be conjured up by the words of an effective wordsmith. Two Ringling-organization shows, Hagenbeck-Wallace in 1933 and Al G. Barnes in 1934, used special lithographs that featured the front of a Pennsylvania Railroad-style steam locomotive bearing down on the

viewer. The posters were largely consumed by the attention-grabbing phrase about what those giant steel circus trains were doing for the typical consumer. They were akin to a powerful, endless steel strand Internet connection, where no filter or search engine was necessary, for all that was worthwhile to be placed right before you. The customer was still king, despite the economic travails of the time.

Marketing of circus trains as a feature waned with the demise of the railroad circus itself, but a Dailey Bros. poster issued in the later 1940s still paid tribute to them with the phrase "Traveling On Its Own STEEL TRAIN Of Double Length Railroad Cars." Forty years later, even the mighty, media-savvy Feld circus empire referred to their trains as a means to differentiate them from all other traveling troupes. Some of the 1984 ads for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus stated that the Greatest Show on Earth was "so gigantic it takes 42 double railroad cars to contain it." Their ad writer surely assumed that everyone knew they moved on trains made of steel.³

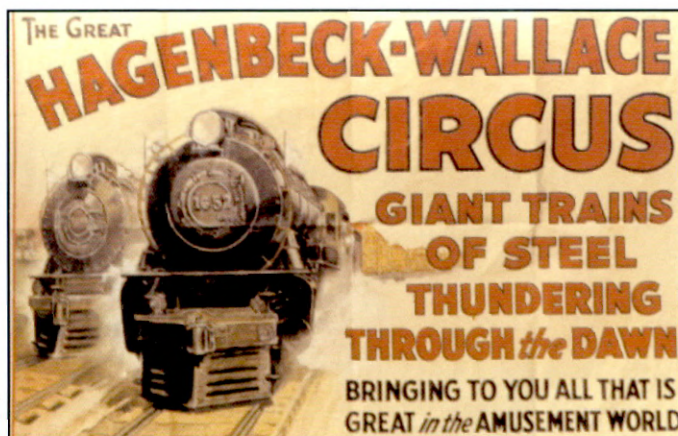
The Origin of Steel Show Cars

Statistics for the manufacture of all railroad freight cars, as compared to circus and other traveling show cars, place the first steel show car purchases into period context. In 1910 there were a total of 2,135,000 railroad freight cars in the United States.⁴ The generally reliable John Havirland list of 1911 show trains includes twenty-one circuses and five Wild West operations totaling 554 and 130 cars, respectively, for a total of 684 conveyances. Deducting 187 advertising cars and sleepers from their summation, yields a total of 497 stock and flat cars with the two types of shows. Only

these types of cars interest us, as show sleepers were typically converted system day coaches, Pullman and tourist cars, refitted into high density hotels on wheels and not designed for specific circus use.⁵ There are no readily available statistics for carnival and other types of outdoor show trains. A rough estimate would suggest that there were an equal number of carnival trains in 1911. Many were leased, as opposed to show owned, and most were twenty cars or less. If all railroad circus, carnival and miscellaneous show cars were added, the total would surely be less than a thousand vehicles. The nominal 500 stock and flat cars transporting circus animals and equipment were but a small fraction, two one-hundredths of one percent, of the total number of freight cars in the United States. One can safely conclude that trends in the railroad business and the decisions by the Master Car Builders Association, the group that controlled car design standards, would dictate the future design of circus railroad cars. They represented a modest niche business, a manufacturing schedule filler, for the car builders that chose to accept orders for them.

Following close on the heels of the Panic of 1893 and their various descents into financial difficulty, the railroads eventually tried to optimize the carrying capacity of every car they moved. Charles L. Taylor (1857-1922), an official of the Carnegie

The designer of this 1933 lithograph captured the essence of a new theme that advanced the interests of the circus in the early years of the Great Depression. Pfening Archives.



Steel Company, traveled through Europe in 1894. There, he observed the success of all-steel or steel-framed freight cars of various vintages already in service. Steel cars weighed substantially less per ton of carrying capacity than wooden cars, on the order of 2.75:1. That enabled train lengths to be more than halved for the same gross carrying capacity. This represented improvements that even stodgy railroad officials and master car builders could not ignore. Several trials of steel cars were made, with Carnegie steel interests foremost as they anticipated supplying the majority of the steel for the new fleets of conveyances. Indeed, Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) utilized his own new railroad, the Pittsburgh, Bessemer & Lake Erie, as a showcase and proving ground for the new cars as master car builders essentially avoided the issue, the most important they faced, as the nineteenth century came to a close.

The revolution in car building, from wood to steel, was particularly facilitated by Charles T. Schoen (1844-1917). His Schoen Pressed Steel Car Company was founded on the premise of optimizing the amount of steel designed into a car, utilizing every pound to its maximum by effective engineering. The firm designed and furnished several hundred steel hopper cars to haul coal and metallurgical coke for the Carnegie steel interests in 1897. The new design cost twice as much as lower capacity and shorter life wooden cars; however, their load rating and durability could not be matched by any wooden car regardless of the design and construction technology employed. Once the railroads committed to the changeover from wooden to steel cars, it happened as fast as railroad economics and car life would permit. Despite poor railroad conditions, orders fell like an avalanche upon builders like Schoen, whose personal prosperity was short lived after he was forced out of his own company by Pittsburgh investors led by Frank N. Hoffstott (1861-1938) and Julius Friend. In 1900, 21% of the 141,800 new cars fabricated were of all-steel or steel-framed construction. Five years later 45% of new cars were made of steel

and by 1910 steel construction had firmly replaced wooden fabrication. Of the 176,300 new cars that year, fully 92% were made of steel or steel-framed construction. In terms of all railroad cars, 26% of those in service in 1910

were steel or steel-framed, a figure that increased to 52% in 1915, 65% in 1920, 76% in 1925 and 84% by 1930. Wooden cars were obsolete, but even as late as 1940 some 3.4% of American railroad cars of wooden construction remained in service. Showmen who invested in steel cars in 1911 were looking to the future.⁶

The quirk in railroad tariffs that fostered the building of extra-long circus cars since the 1870s continued into the era of steel cars. It does not appear that the change of construction material, from wood to steel, presented any significant challenge. Car builders had been building longer steel-framed passenger cars for some time and it was only a matter of altering the designs to suit circus operational peculiarities that was necessary. Capital expense and managerial attitude, not engineering expertise, stalled the implementation of steel circus trains.

The circus led the outdoor show business in the design and application of specially designed show cars for travel from 1872 through 1910, but the mantle of progress passed to other entertainments in 1911. In that year Gordon William "Pawnee Bill" Lillie (with his partner, Thomas A. Smith) and Johnny J. Jones, the leaders of the Wild West and carnival fields, respectively, placed orders for the first conventionally made show cars of steel. Both were likely out to prove something, namely, to further justify and consolidate their leadership positions within their respective fields. Jones later added two additional firsts to his credit, buying the earliest known 70 and 72-foot long steel flats in 1913 and 1917, respectively. The mantle of progress would not return to the circus until 1927, when one or possibly two cir-



Smaller shows like Campbell Bros. Circus only dreamed about the day when their people and vehicles would ride on trains of steel. Pfening Archives.

cuses ordered the first steel show cars rated at 50-ton capacity.

The obvious question is what inspired Lillie and Jones, among all showmen, to make the initial steel car purchases. The inquiry is especially valid when one considers that steel cars cost a premium compared to wooden show cars, which were still being made as late as the early 1920s. There appears to be several aspects to the answer.

The railroads had moved toward the widespread use of steel cars for their own purposes by 1905. Shows were quite delinquent in making the change because of the large amount of capital required to purchase a train of steel conveyances. Harry Parrish, Master of Transportation with the Campbell Bros. Circus in 1910, observed "The interstate commerce laws are very stringent in regard to all equipment and especially a circus. However the railroads are equipping and using as fast as they can all steel equipment which will be the standard for all rolling stock in the near future, but very few, if any, circuses will be able to use the steel equipment on account of the enormous cost of construction."⁷ For most circuses, the expense of steel cars could not, or would not, be sustained until the 1920s. In hindsight, it is almost remarkable that the railroads tolerated wooden cars in system service until nearly 1930, more than fifteen years after they became the mainstay of railroad car fleets. It would take an ultimatum from the railroad industry in the late 1920s to

finally force wooden show cars off the rails.

There may have been a shortage of useable, second-hand wooden cars in 1910. A mini-boom in railroad shows was underway. In the circus business, the Ringlings placed the 47-car Adam Forepaugh and Sells Bros. Enormous Shows United back on the road. Several new Wild West troupes began to tour, including the Kit Carson outfit in 1910 and the Young Buffalo in 1911. The carnival business was even more fertile in terms of new outfits. All of this activity depleted the available pool of show cars and suggested to the most progressive, and successful traveling show owners that new cars were the way to go. In the railroad scene of 1911, that meant steel cars.

No less a personage than circus proprietor Fred Buchanan, owner of railroad shows from 1907 to 1931, shed light on the public's perception of show trains. He was quoted as saying that "railroad equipment is a minor item with the public. What the public looks for are fine horses, a good street parade and a nice flash of canvas on the lot. If one has those essentials, it matters not if arrival in town is on wood or steel cars."⁸ Buchanan's observation stands in unison with the actions of fellow circus proprietor Ben Wallace (1848-1921), who always made certain that his show was recognized for the quality of its horses. Wallace never owned a steel car as long as he was in the business (through 1913), despite having the financial wherewithal to have done so. Buchanan's point was that just about everyone knew and admired good horse flesh, even more so than we do automobiles today. The typical citizen did not own a railroad car and would have had absolutely no idea whether steel was good, bad or indifferent compared to wood, except when it came to reading the reports of disastrous railroad wrecks in which wooden-framed cars telescoped one within another, often with great loss of life. Despite Buchanan's observation, he was compelled to convert his show from a wooden to steel car operation in the mid to late 1920s.

In the world of the circus, change came slowly and cautiously, simple and reliable was better than new and

untested when on the road. Getting the circus there was second only to letting them know it was coming.

The mighty and financially powerful industry leader, Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows, passed up a golden opportunity in late May 1914 to change to steel cars. More than half of their train, 43 of nominally 80 cars, mostly their stocks and flats, was lost in a fire at Cleveland, Ohio.⁹ Rather than to rebuild for the future with steel cars, they bought essentially in-kind replacements from their long term wooden car supplier, Barney & Smith of Dayton, Ohio. Wooden cars had worked for them for years and were a known commodity. Further, being well advanced in their years, the brothers probably questioned why they should double the investment with steel cars.¹⁰ Beyond the capital cost, the late Gordon Potter communicated to the author that he thought there was also a Ringling, and later Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows mentality against steel cars, perhaps arising from some reports about them on other shows. The anti-metal car mind set might have originated with the peculiar iron pipe cars of the 1876-1880 Barnum circus.

The Wild West

The first circus steel cars were born out of the long saga of the Wild West exhibition. One man, a legendary figure, perhaps the most internationally famous private citizen of his day, initiated an extended series of events that led to the fabrication of these vehicles. William Frederick "Buffalo Bill" Cody (1846-1917) was a bonafide Western figure with the added experience of numerous winter stage tours when he was promoted to lead a celebration. The community of North Platte, Nebraska had not planned an Independence Day celebration in 1882 and when Cody remonstrated against that void he was essentially put in charge of making it happen. Though others had presented Indian-based entertainments in the 1850s and perhaps even proposed something akin to an equine-based aggregation as early as 1876, Cody's celebration placed him at the cutting edge of the Wild West business. The "Old Glory

Buffalo Bill & Dr. Carver's Wild West!

Arrival by Special Train of Ten Cars.

One Hundred and Thirty-Six Performers

Sensational Street Parade, Wednesday, at 10 a. m.

ONE MILE OF NEW AND
STARTLING SIGHTS!

A Band of Twenty Cowboys!

A Company of Famous Scouts!

A Group of Talented Mexicans!

A Camp of Sixty Indians!

Buffalo Bill, Dr. W. F. Carver.

Capt. Bogardus, Major North,

Buck Taylor, the Cowboy King!

John Nelson and his Indian Family!

Over One Hundred Indian Horses!

A Herd of Wild Buffaloes!

A Herd of Texas Steers!

A Herd of Mountain Elk!

The Great Indian Camp!

This Buffalo Bill & Dr. Carver Wild West newspaper ad was used in 1883. Pfening Archives.

Blow Out" was the seminal event in Wild West history, marked as the origin of the genre. Indians, developed themes and extravaganzas with pseudo-intellectual trappings would come later, but they were all applied to this basic vehicle. Cody's vision engaged the interest of a thousand entrants, ten times what he'd expected, providing a barometer of the popularity of the activity among western hands. With a career as an itinerant stage performer behind him, organizing a traveling show to exploit the popularity of the big party seemed like the natural thing to do.

Cody and Dr. William F. "Doc" Carver (1851-1927) teamed up in North Platte to organize the first traveling outdoor enterprise dedicat-

ed to a theme of Wild West activity and historical re-enactments. It has been written that the affair was started with each principal contributing \$5,000. The amount suggests a modest physical plant in the beginning, when at least some fraction of the money had to serve as working capital, for advance publicity, initial travel and sustenance, until such time as a stream of revenue commenced.¹¹ They were slated to debut on May 17, 1883 at Omaha, Nebraska, but poor weather conditions delayed the opening until May 19. Some 2,000 people came to town for the festivities, including the parade, with its featured marching band, a stage coach, three Pawnees and other participants. A crowd estimated at 10,000 witnessed the matinee on the 19th, but most everyone went home thereafter, just a small crowd being present for the evening presentation. The number swelled to 9,000 for the final show on the 20th.¹² "The Wild West, Cody & Carver's Rocky Mountain & Prairie Exhibition" loaded onto some system railroad cars, perhaps arranged for by general manager Col. John M. Burke, and moved on to the next date, Council Bluffs, Iowa, just across the Missouri River.¹³ Tickets were priced at 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children, the same as for the largest circuses of the time. The performance lasted two hours, from four to six in the late afternoon. As to the immediate relevance of re-enacting the West of recent history, a Springfield, Illinois reporter advised "it is a thing of the very highest importance to children, because by the time they are adults the whole thing will have gone to the forgotten past."¹⁴

The memoir written by circus man Gilbert N. "Gil" Robinson (1845-1928) reveals that Cody narrowly missed becoming partners with some seasoned circus proprietors almost immediately. Gil wrote that his family's John Robinson Circus, which originated in 1842, played Omaha the day after the 1883 opener. "Business was so light [Cody] was thoroughly disgusted. Col. Cody tried to persuade brother John [F. Robinson Jr. (1843-1921)] and I to take an interest in the show. The matter was

thoroughly debated, but it was finally decided that it would be unwise to invest in a show to which we could not give our personal attention." The Robinsons were likely pleased that they'd declined the offer as the season's difficulties unfolded, but family members always liked to recall how close they came to being partners with a true American legend.¹⁵

The public was aware that gatherings, especially the arrival of a traveling circus, would be accompanied by pickpockets, clothes line thieves and all sorts of criminals that followed in its wake. The camp followers were not a circus "privilege" until the corruption of the Civil War era broadly institutionalized such activity. There was also the display of female flesh and form, covered but defined, which contradicted local morals but was acceptable because it was separated from the community by the ring. For those concerned about such things, Buffalo Bill's Wild West was "in all respects a moral show." It was "as decorous as a Sunday school," a statement amongst the earliest that may have led to the term "Sunday school show." Showmen divided into two groups; those who rejected all forms of unpleasantness, took steps to eliminate it from their domain and built sound alle-

Col. William F. Cody in 1907. Image courtesy of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. Glasier collection.



giances for wholesomeness, thereby becoming "Sunday school" shows; and others who knowingly embraced it as a means to supplement their profit margins at the risk of their reputations.¹⁶

It would seem that the 1883 tour started without any grift, but ignorance and sagging finances may have rendered Cody and Carver subject to invasion and unknowing or tacit acceptance of the grifters. Before the 1884 tour commenced, Cody wrote his new partner Nate Salsbury on April 12, thinking ahead about the enterprise that would open less than a month later. Cody inquired "Nate what can or had we better do about gambling privileges [?] I can get the best man in the world to run them and do it in a nice quiet way if you say so. What do you think about it? Write me and tell me what to do—and if we don't get that money what in K Christ are we to do?" Obviously, there was both a shortage of capital and a desire to increase the take on the road with some well-selected money artists. Wisely, Salsbury appears to have put his foot down and forever banned such activity from the Wild West. Circuses hired Pinkerton guards as early as 1881 to rid them of the pestilence and Louis Warren says that Cody hired private detectives, but the reference utilized pertains to the era of the partnership with Bailey, 1895 and beyond. There is no other comment about the topic in other accounts of the Wild West, Cody's Wild West being free of the riff raff but several troupes operated by others were notorious for the presence of the "lucky boys."¹⁷

For multiple reasons, after one season together Cody and Carver went their separate ways. The parting was not harmonious and extended litigation consumed the energies of both for several years. In one of the ghost-written books published under Cody's name it was admitted, "The enterprise was not a complete financial success during the first season, though everywhere our performances were attended by immense audiences." The admission of one aspect of the failure was an important one; large crowds, alone did not make a traveling show financially successful. Large revenues along with con-

trolled expenses and saving for the future were necessary. Almost without thinking, the presentation Cody conceived required placement before grandstands, which had to be rented, and necessitated very large crowds to meet the daily budget, or "nut." Driving tracks and fairgrounds, the venues that they contracted, were typically beyond the edge of communities, not reached by horse cars. With the first electric-powered trolleys being several years in the future, attendance necessitated the use of personal carriages, bicycles or walking to the sites.¹⁸

The most important connection of Cody's career was established when he entered into a partnership with theatrical manager Nate Salsbury (1846-1902). Together they launched the new Buffalo Bill's Wild West in 1884. For many years, Salsbury owned and operated a successful musical comedy troupe called Salsbury's Troubadours that had toured as far as Australia. He was well versed in show operations and brought astute management and good business practices to the fledgling Wild West.

His methods clashed with holdovers from 1883, notably former business manager John M. Burke (1857-1917), a man known as "Arizona John." He was one of many newspaper men who graduated to the road promoting and managing amusement troupes.¹⁹ The partners expanded for 1884 but results proved unsatisfactory to the tune of \$60,000 to \$80,000, following the loss of equipment in a steamboat accident and other incidents.²⁰

Financial circumstances must have caused them to bring one Evelyn Booth into the firm on January 8, 1886. For a \$30,000 infusion of cash payable on or before April 1, 1886, Booth became a one-third owner of the show, shared a quarter of the profits and incurred a third of the expenses. Whether the contract was activated and endured the three year term specified is unknown, especially since Cody and Salsbury retained total control and also could void the partnership created at any time. The Booth deal is not mentioned or explained in any of the major Cody biographies.²¹ The Wild West opened at St. Louis on May 9,

1886, where a crowd estimated at 40,000 filled the fairgrounds. The show was playing to one-day crowds that represented three to four times the largest circus audiences of the time. It was not uncommon for the larger cities to yield numbers that reached well into five figures. Engagements heading east were sometimes contracted for an entire week, with Erastina, a summer resort owned by Erastus Wiman and B & O Railroad executive Robert Garrett, filling the schedule from June to September. It was said that the losses of 1885 were recovered there, where powerful electric arc and Edison incandescent lights illuminated the 16-acre site that had been prepared at an expense of \$100,000. A notable guest on July 30, 1886 was P. T. Barnum.²²



Col. John M. Burke knew more newspaper people and was able to garner more free press for Buffalo Bill's Wild West than any other man. Pfening Archives.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West Company was formally incorporated in New Jersey on February 26, 1887, voiding and superseding the previous agreement with Booth. Cody and Salsbury each held 35 of the 100 shares of stock, with the remainder distributed to Frank C. Maeder, Milton E. Milner and William D. Guthrie. They appear to have served the same purpose as Booth, namely, as a source of

capital. The minority investors appear to have always received their dividends courtesy of Salsbury. Once he died and his share was sold, they apparently weren't paid again.²³ The purpose of the incorporation may have been to finance the transfer of the Wild West to Europe, where the show played from April 1887 to April 1888.

The year 1888 was the last one in the United States before the aggregation moved across the Atlantic to Europe for a four-year stint. The tour, limited to five large communities (Erastina, Staten Island, six weeks; Philadelphia, August 13 to September 16; Baltimore; Washington, D. C., September 24 to 29; and Richmond, VA state fair, October 3 to 19) reportedly sold 600,000 tickets between May 30 and October 19. Daily expenses were \$2,000, it grossed \$2,500,000 and a profit of \$100,000 was realized. Simple math suggests the numbers are inaccurate. Almost certainly the revenue is wildly overstated.²⁴

For the seasons of 1889 through 1892 it was again taken to Europe, where the American West was readily appreciated. Cody and Salsbury reportedly received financing for the European expedition from a consortium of Wall Street and railroad executives organized by T. C. Crawford. For their \$130,000 loan they were to receive 30% of the gross revenues. When all they received was \$50,000 on the loan principal, the group went public claiming that the large Parisian crowds reported in the newspapers should have paid off at the ticket wagons. No resolution to the situation was announced; the incident isn't mentioned in the standard Cody biographies.²⁵

In 1893, Americans from across the country came to Chicago to enjoy the magnificent World's Columbian Exposition. Many travelers also availed themselves of the opportunity to visit Buffalo Bill's Wild West, situated across from the fair on the other side of Stony Island Avenue. The broad, national popularity of the enterprise was evident from the thousands of people who bought tickets. The geographic diversity of the Chicago crowds was not replicated in 1894, when the Wild West spent a season in New York City. It proved to

be a loser, in both money and talent, as it ended Salsbury's days as an effective, hands-on manager, a loss sorely felt by Cody. Once these two venues had been exhausted it was a natural progression that the Wild West would be reformatted as a traveling enterprise, one that was able to reach more Americans than ever before, from coast to coast and border to border. It brought about Buffalo Bill's Wild West as a daily mobile traveling aggregation for 1895.



Nate Salsbury brought vision and management skills to his partner William F. Cody. Denver Public Library, Western History Collection NS-61.

The general popularity of Buffalo Bill's enterprise suggested opportunity to entrepreneurs both in and outside of the outdoor show business. Others with reason jumped into the Wild West business immediately, but few built up any substantial following or lasted more than a couple seasons. A number of investors and performers framed western-themed troupes that staged activity in front of fairground and race track grandstands.²⁶ Dr. Carver followed with his "Great Wild West Show," a partnership with W. C. Coup and a Mr. Hart in 1884, the same year that "The Great Rocky Mountain Show" played race track grandstands. Cortina's Wild West (W. Hennessey) was out in 1885 featuring Capt. Elmer E. Stubbs, as was Fargo & Company, Skakel & Martin and Carver's continuing venture. Nevada Ned's Wild West (Dr. N. T. Oliver) was active in 1886. Someone named Wild

Bill organized a Texas and Cowboy Show for playing driving park race tracks in 1887. Pawnee Bill launched a fairground troupe in late 1887 and a traveling outfit in 1888, into which Comanche Bill's was temporarily merged. For 1889 Carver (with Fred C. Whitney) had another Wild West playing driving park grandstands, with Pomeroy & Hilton's Wild West and Oklahoma Harry Hill's Wild West also on tour. Things settled down in the 1890s, the flurry of pioneers seemingly having run their course. Jacobs Bros. Texas Ranch Wild West operated in 1890 and in 1893 Carver had another company out, with Kennedy Bros. Wild West also on tour. The first edition of a Wild West bearing the name Buckskin Bill was en route the same year. In 1894 there was Buck Taylor's Wild West followed in 1895 by Beveridge's Great and Only Montana Wildest West and for 1897 Colorado Charlie took out a company.²⁷

The circus business exhausted four different elephant-themed features between 1878 and 1884 (herds, babies, giants and white elephants) and was in need of a new feature to stabilize their attendance and revenues. An 1884 writer for the *Spirit of the Times*, after seeing a performance of Buffalo Bill's Wild West thought that "The only artistic interest in the show is that it seems to contain the germ of the circus of the future. Even the smallest boys of the present generation must be weary of seeing bespangled persons riding around a small ring upon the broad, padded backs of horses trained to gallop as gently as rocking chairs. The circus is behind the times. For years it has introduced no novelties... Now some tribes of Indians, notable the Comanches, have long been famous for feats which no circus rider has ever attempted in the ring. ...Why should not Buffalo Bill engage some Comanche braves and show us real feats? Let him take the hint for next season and he will make Barnum and Forepaugh shake in their shoes, despite their white elephants, gilded chariots, Roman races and triple rings." Another writer advised that Buffalo Bill's was "far more interesting than any circus."²⁸

Not surprisingly, starting in 1884,

for the next few tours a number of major railroad circuses, with the exception of Barnum & Bailey, added a Wild West element to their offerings. Frank Butler and his wife, Phoebe, better known as Annie Oakley, spent the entire season of 1884 on the Sells Bros. Circus in the after show, billed as "Champion Rifle Shots" in the olio and playing roles in the pantomime that closed the concert.²⁹ Doc Carver served as an exhibition marksman with W. W. Cole in late 1884. He returned to Cole's circus as a western feature in 1886 and for 1888 and 1889 was with Adam Forepaugh. A. H. Bogardus, another marksman, was with Forepaugh in 1886-1887 and the Sells Bros. in 1888. Pawnee Bill appeared with the Sells Bros. circus Wild West offering in 1887 and may have been with Forepaugh for a brief period in 1889. Stubbs returned to be on the Doris & Colvin circus in 1887, with a featured "Custer Battle or Massacre."

These western exhibitions took over a substantial portion of the ring performance in some cases. Forepaugh staged a large re-enactment of Custer's encounter with destiny, "The Battle of the Little Big Horn." His circus had a very large Wild West contingent in 1889, both in the big top and the street parade. A few smaller shows combined circus and Wild West into their titles, but they were still largely circuses with a Wild West element inserted into the performance. In later years, the Wild West portions were relegated to the concert, or after show, which big top ticket buyers could witness following the performance after paying a second charge. They were revived with the rise of film cowboys in the first decade of the 1900s, continued through the 1910s and 1920s and were last featured on major shows in the 1930s, when a number of cowboy stars operated traveling troupes in their own names.

Wild West impresarios also organized troupes to stage season-long exhibitions, of both of the "ethnological exhibit" and entertainment varieties, on world's fair midways (1884, 1898-1899, 1901, 1904 and 1907) and at amusement parks, especially in the 1903 to 1917 period. There were also limited term engagements (two

to six weeks) at amusement parks, as well as multi-day presentations inside arenas, amphitheatres, and before race track and fairground grandstands. Some outfits, like those of California Frank (C. F. Hafley), Dakota Max and



Julia Allen, were framed to tour entire traveling seasons as back end shows with railroad carnivals, complete with a banner line or wagon front, an arena canvas and portable seating. As if domestic operations weren't adequate, a few American entrepreneurs took Wild West operations to Europe, South America and perhaps elsewhere around the globe. It was a frightfully disjointed business to monitor, but one that seldom lacked for participants with the necessary skills to demonstrate their work, and lives, as play or history before the public.

The Wild West Goes Circus Style

The origin and subsequent corporate history leading to the Buffalo Bill's Wild West Combined With Pawnee Bill's Great Far East is one of the most complex and confusing sequences of partnerships and financial transactions in all of outdoor show history. The challenge to explain and comprehend it mirrors the difficulties that were inherent in forming and sustaining the enterprise through nearly three decades.

The early years of the circus business, from 1793 into the 1820s, were marked by performer-owners. The change to a series of one day engagements, with travel each day, necessitated the infusion of capital to purchase equipment and the hiring of people with the skills to manage it. Performers lacking the necessary skill set, either acquired it or found a partner who could handle the money and its use while they tended to the needs of the ring. The model was unknowingly replicated in the early years of the Wild West, which also drew upon similar arrangements amongst traveling stage troupes.

While it was quite common for just about every Wild West impresario to partner with a financial man, the

This 1896 Buffalo Bill advance car had been used by W. W. Cole's Circus in the 1880s. Pfening Archives.

"Two Bills show" proprietorship was even more convoluted. In addition to its inherent complexity, the underlying partnerships that made the show a reality were generally unknown to the general public and even major players in the outdoor show business. That ignorance played a supporting role in the formation of the first circus train of steel. We cannot detail all of the transactions from the formation of the first Wild West in 1883 until the dismemberment of the Two Bills show in 1913. A summary of the important events is necessary to trace the developments that led to the fabrication of the steel cars and then to the transactions that brought them to the circus business.³⁰

Salsbury was in ill health the winter of 1894-1895, and remained sick until the end of his life. His condition was the result of illness and overexertion at the Wild West adjacent to the World's Columbian Exposition (186 days of continuous exhibition) and the lengthy 1894 engagement at Brooklyn (126 days, no Sunday shows and September 14th missed). Lacking the stamina to assemble the show for 1895 or manage it, Salsbury eventually sought an alternative, one that had been suggested to him. Had his health permitted, Salsbury may have been able to move the Wild West on a daily basis. There were substantial risks in doing so, beyond the lingering weak economy from the Panic of 1893. Similar ventures to convert static, world's fair exhibitions into daily moving concerns were failures. They included the Boer War show of 1905 and two fire and flames shows in 1906. Salsbury's own effort in 1895, an ill-conceived pseudo-ethnological outfit titled "Black America," which he apparently guided directly, proved to

be a bust. It also took about four to six years, until 1898-1900, before showmen enthused by the Chicago fair midway eventually evolved the successful formula for the railroad carnival, and it moved

only once per week. Daily moving shows were a challenge, one that had many idiosyncrasies, unusual quirks and an all-consuming demand of its constituents. There was little forgiveness for the inexperienced or novice. It was a daily cash and carry existence, living off cash flow. A week or two of rain could put a traveling show out of business—permanently, as could opposition battles, a bad railroad mishap, or a canopy fire. For good reasons, Salsbury recognized that involving an expert in the logistics of the Wild West was a prudent move.

There are two, partially complementary versions how the Wild West came to be converted into a daily moving operation in the hands of circus mastermind James A. Bailey (1847-1906). A highly accomplished circus agent, Louis E. Cooke (1850-1923), took personal credit for forging the Cody-Salsbury-Bailey connection in an installment of his 1915 memoir. Cooke stated that Bailey "had no great personal acquaintance with Colonel Cody and Nate Salsbury." His version, originating in the latter part of 1894, had himself and Bailey's highly respected and trusted treasurer, Merritt F. Young (1850-1897), proposing to take out the Adam Forepaugh circus in 1895. Following losing seasons in 1892 and 1893 generally attributable to the Panic, it was a grossly reduced operation in 1894. There was one ring instead of the traditional three, just 21 railroad cars instead of the typical 50. Bailey was surely involved in the downsizing, given the gravity of the consequences. It toured under the management of Joseph T. McCaddon (1859-1938), Bailey's brother-in-law, and James P. Anderson (1837-1911), a competent manager who recently sold out his share in Ben Wallace's circus when crime around that enterprise reached an unacceptable level. The Forepaugh outfit closed on the

6th of October, 1894. While Young was in Philadelphia assessing and inventorying the Forepaugh property, Cooke encountered Buffalo Bill, an old friend, at the Hoffman House on Madison Square, Cody's usual "headquarters" in New York City. Cody's outfit had just completed an extended engagement at Ambrose Park in Brooklyn (May 12 to October 6, 1894). Cooke observed that the Cody and Salsbury routine of playing fairs and parks had expended itself and that the future lay in a daily moving enterprise. With Cody accepting his analysis, Cooke connected the two possibilities and envisioned utilizing the stored Forepaugh equipment to make a mobile Buffalo Bill's Wild West a reality. He drew up plans for a canopy and seating; broached the idea with Bailey; and then intercepted Young before he saw Bailey again and made him a convert to the proposition. Cooke prepared the necessary contract for a general partnership that split the responsibilities for the show, creating the essential symbiotic relationship that made it work. Within 24 hours, all parties had signed on. An entirely different railroad enterprise would take to the rails in the spring of 1895. The downside for Cooke, according to his version, was that Bailey did not release him or Young to the Wild West. Bailey rightly recognized that their talents transcended the management of a single troupe. Despite the desires of Cody and Salsbury to have Cooke with them, McCaddon was appointed by Bailey as the operation's general manager, representing his interests and staying with it through 1897.³¹

Another version, one that has an earlier point of origin, paints a somewhat different picture. During the appearance of Buffalo Bill's Wild West adjacent to the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893, Salsbury met with McCaddon. He was in Chicago as manager of the Forepaugh circus for an engagement at the lakefront from June 5 to 18. They had encountered each other previously, while both were touring in Australia in 1877.³² McCaddon was with the Cooper & Bailey circus, owned by Bailey and James E. Cooper (1832-1892), while Salsbury had his Troubadours stage troupe

there. Salsbury asked McCaddon for permission to have his master mechanic measure the circus railroad cars, seating and posed myriad other logistical queries, having the intention to place the Wild West on rails at the conclusion of the world's fair. In that way it could reach the many American communities that had never had the opportunity to enjoy the personal presence of the legendary Buffalo Bill. Rather than reinvent the wheels of show transport and tour as competition, McCaddon suggested waiting until Salsbury could meet with Bailey, who would know how to organize and route the troupe to successfully reach new markets. McCaddon sent a letter to Bailey detailing the meeting, but nothing further became of the encounter.³³

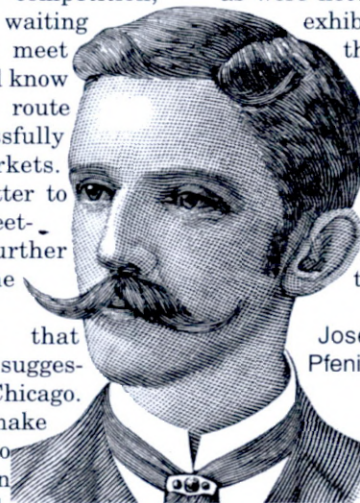
McCaddon noted that Salsbury recalled the suggestion made to him in Chicago. He had McCaddon make the arrangements to meet with Bailey in New York, where a collaborative one-year agreement for the traveling exhibition was hammered out. Like Cooke, McCaddon claimed that he designed the canopy to be used with the outfit, which became adopted as the standard for all such traveling Wild West entertainments. Though McCaddon failed to mention any activity by Cooke in his 1938 memoir, his letter to Bailey on August 16, 1904, stated that he and Cooke had negotiated with Salsbury in regard to renting the Forepaugh equipment to Salsbury. One would conclude that in some way both McCaddon and Cooke were party to the formation of the venture, each recalling in their respective memoirs how they wanted their participation to be recorded for posterity.³⁴

The final agreement, dated December 10, 1894, was between Buffalo Bill's Wild West Company and James A. Bailey, as an individual. It obligated Cody and Salsbury to provide at their expense a cast and crew of 300, with an equal number of animals, along with all other necessary properties to present a first-

class exhibition. They also paid for the production and delivery of all printed materials, including lithographs, couriers, programs, tickets, etc., along the route throughout the season. They had complete charge of the performance with Cody to personally appear unless sickness or extreme obligations prevented it. Cody and Salsbury were also to feed everyone (including Bailey's people) and all animals, supply all water, lighting, and performance properties

as were necessary to conduct the exhibitions. This entitled them to 50% of the season's gross revenues.

The proceeds from the sale of a pamphlet or book associated with Buffalo Bill's Wild West were to be solely theirs, too.



Joseph T. McCaddon, Pfening Archives.

Bailey's designated responsibilities included furnishing at his expense a train of railroad cars, a fleet of wagons, as well as a canopy, seats, harness, etc., and experienced men to support the logistical movements of the enterprise. He also was to furnish two advertising cars and a force of personnel for their operation; pay lot rental and license fees; all newspaper and billboard charges, rental of billposter teams, etc. All of the cars and wagons were to bear the Buffalo Bill's Wild West title, or "another suitable inscription," with sleepers to be equipped with bedding. Bailey was empowered to place on the lot employees who reported solely and directly to him, including: a superintendent; a personal representative; a bookkeeper and ticket sellers; an inspector of door-keepers and ticket counter. They provided control over the physical plant and assured "first count" for his interests, with settlements being made on Mondays. For this he was also accorded 50% of the gross revenues. The income accruing from any other privileges, side shows, candy stands, etc. was to be split equally.

Bailey inserted several clauses to

insulate himself and the agreement from the sort of financial deals that had Cody had fallen prey to in the past. The agreement explicitly prevented Cody or Salsbury from signing Bailey's name to any instrument and also clarified that they were not co-partners of Bailey. No notes or obligations were to be signed by anyone, all of the business to be conducted on a cash basis. Bailey and Salsbury were free to do as they pleased in the conduct of the business agreed to, but Cody's entire time was specifically designated. Risks, losses, injuries, were the responsibility of each party for their respective departments. Further, Bailey was indemnified from lawsuits arising from injuries incurred by show personnel or audience members as a result of the dangerous nature of the performance. The proposed season began about May 1st and continued through about December 1st, two performances per day.

Richard E. Conover was of the opinion that the contract's language caused the partners to disavow the existence of the agreement. We believe that he misinterpreted the language that was intended to protect Bailey and the operation from and financial obligations signed by Cody.

The final clause of the agreement specified routing limitations, essentially a non-compete arrangement that gave Bailey's circus first crack at selected markets in 1895. These included: New York City; Brooklyn; six towns in New Jersey; four in Pennsylvania; and New Orleans. He also had sole right to all states west of Ohio. Essentially, Buffalo Bill's could route through New England, the Middle Atlantic states and the South, except as noted.³⁵ An examination of the Barnum & Bailey 1895 route shows that it played the New York metro area; hop-scotched across New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Ohio, playing most dates in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Canada, Wisconsin, Iowa, Colorado, Wyoming and Texas. That was all acceptable, but they flaunted the agreement at season's end with five dates in

Louisiana and Mississippi that were Bill show territory. Buffalo Bill's started at Pottsville, Pennsylvania, went north to Albany, then went through Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, New York, Ohio, back to Pennsylvania and New York, then New Jersey and south to Maryland, Washington, D. C., Virginia, North and South Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee and Atlanta. Its route complied with the agreement, presumably because Bailey's people routed it.

It was a workable yet tenuous arrangement, fraught with a multitude of difficulties and differing personalities, but the speed with which it was conceived and approved suggests that all of the partners readily embraced it for mutual benefit. The agreement was renewed annually, endured the lean years following the Panic of 1893 and remained in place until a new contract was signed on January 9, 1902, which provided for a two year (1903-1904) tour of Europe.

An important observation about the performance portion of the collaboration, represented by Cody's and Salsbury's interest, was that it had little tangible value. The performance properties were insignificant, largely embodied in one stagecoach and some other wheeled apparatus, weaponry and targets, wardrobe, saddle horses and associated tack, bison and other four-legged creatures. The real value of it was in the specified, personal presence of the living legend himself, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, and the revenues derived from the crowds that came to see this unexcelled, aggrandized hero of the frontier.

Elephants pushed railroad cars around the crowded Bridgeport winter quarters rail yards. Pfening Archives.

tier. In a bankruptcy action, the performance portion had little value other than Cody's contract for personal service.

Buffalo Bill biographers have had difficulty accepting the conversion of the Wild West from something of a pristine, altruistic, historical and educational exhibition under Cody and Salsbury into what they characterize as a commercial, money-making circus entertainment under Bailey. That is puzzling on two accounts. The collaborative partnership designated Cody and Salsbury responsible for the primary arena exhibitions. It was their domain and no where does one find complaints about the assigned managers representing Bailey advising, telling or forcing the exhibition managers to do anything concerning performance content. Further, the Wild West was always a for-profit, money making proposition that served as Cody's cash cow for his other less successful ventures. As Cody declared in 1881, "I don't play on the stage or do anything else for the fun of the thing; I work to make money."³⁶

Salsbury had realized that the possibilities for longer engagements in major metropolitan areas had been expended by 1894 and that the Wild West needed to be taken to the people. The same lesson had been learned by the circus business between 1793 and 1825, when it adopted the tent to facilitate daily moves between communities. Conversion, clearly, re-invigorated and extended the existence of Buffalo Bill's Wild West for nearly another two decades. The arguments advanced parallel those against today's cultural institutions, such as museums, which have been forced to seek support from corporations when reductions in charitable giving and government support have made it impossible to continue meaningful programming.

The single most consuming change that "circus style" operations imposed upon Buffalo Bill's Wild West was the adoption of daily show movements, six days per week, with Sundays off or serving as a day to



make a long jump. Richard Walsh declared "the worst of all . . . [were] one-day stands . . . new to Cody . . . [and] planned by a circus man."³⁷ Cody admitted in 1910 "I am trying to get out of the show business. I haven't missed a single performance for seven years. You see I am compelled to work sick or well and at 67 its harder to pull myself together than it was 30 years ago."³⁸ In the past, the fastest paced Wild West schedule of movements was three or more days in a single community, with travel time between cities. The new partnership inaugurated the incessant everyday movements, leaving little time for anything but the all consuming traveling show lifestyle. It was an out and back life every day, sleeping on the train, up early and back late, a life largely lived in an outdoor public venue. There were occasional Sundays for relaxation in a hotel, or perhaps a date here and there where the show resided for a few days, as in Chicago or St. Louis. Otherwise, the conveniences of life were limited to those that could be established in a temporary camp arrangement on the lot. The owners and top managers had either a tent or an office wagon to repose in, most others sought refuge in a communal dressing tent, or if lucky, an emptied baggage wagon. It was an existence of work that one either learned to accept, or opposed in quiet desperation and moved on. Some embraced it because every day was a new experience, without commitment to any locale or social structure other than that of the troupe. It was surely an exhausting regimen, causing many to take the entire time off between the end of one tour and the start of another.

After sitting still in two different locations throughout 1893 and 1894, the Wild West racked up considerable travel during each of the next six years (1895-1900). The numbers, which varied each year with a different contracted route, were as follows: railroad distance, 8,041 to 11,649 miles; number of railroads, 34 to 48 systems; length of season, 189 to 200 days; number of stands, 104 to 135 communities; number of performances, 320 to 345. In 1902, the last year in America before departing for Europe, the Wild West traveled even

farther, some 14,039 miles. That was exceeded by the last solo tour of 1908, when Cody proclaimed that the Wild West had journeyed 15,940 miles, the most ever. He must have been well acclimated to the rituals by then.³⁹

Some of the actions taken to sustain the Wild West as a viable business enterprise, as opposed to a personality ordained exhibition, surely caused Cody difficulty. The conflict arose in Cody's own perception of what he was staging. He and his people always held to their presentation of an "exhibition;" it was not to be construed as a "show." The external changes, an aspect of the total presentation, were difficult to accept from a philosophical perspective. Once it became a daily moving operation, the Wild West competed directly with circuses for disposable income. Buffalo Bill's Wild West was increasingly viewed by the public as another traveling amusement, one that had an aggrandized personality as its star attraction, a veritable superstar of the time. It was a natural outgrowth of the slogan implemented in 1884, "America's National Entertainment." Cody biographers like Walsh stated "the Wild West was further diluted by mixture with a spectacle of the Far East," a statement applicable to 1909-1913, but it was that sort of adjunct that kept the enterprise viable and which was copied by similar organizations.⁴⁰

The difference between "exhibition" and "show" that was so meaningful to Cody was not as significant to his audience, but it was made known by reporters who had some sensitivity or recollection of the immediate past and shared his perspective. It flowed from a sense of loss, of nostalgia, just as the frontier that was embodied in the exhibition had been closed and lost forever.

Externally, the architecture of the Wild West grounds was altered, incorporating the trappings of daily moving shows. Elements that improved the profitability of the aggregation, such as souvenir sales stands, and the side show were all profitable activities in which the partners shared the net proceeds. The specter of grift, short-changing, pickpockets and such, a sure-fire means to make even more money, was always an

issue when people gathered in a public venue, and the Wild West was no different. The fact that the Cody and Salsbury operation during the Bailey years was entirely free from any such management-sponsored skullduggery was affirmed by Dexter Fellows. He wrote "The Buffalo Bill show and other shows with which I have been associated never tolerated grift in any form." Pinkerton agents and other security personnel had been hired by leading circuses as early as the 1870s to rid their showgrounds of itinerant con men and criminals who attempted to perpetrate their thievery on preoccupied customers and the unwary. Some circuses and Wild West operations embraced and thrived on sanctioned grift, which, according to Fellows, endured because of the overt collaboration of local politicians and law enforcement personnel.⁴¹

Contemporaries found fault with the addition of the side show, not added until 1896, or other trappings that were commonly seen on a circus lot. In general, these additions were revenue generators. The fact that they were found with literally every traveling Wild West troupe after 1907 is testimony to their essential nature. There was good reason for the alterations. Circus agent R. M. Harvey stated that the Bill show "was one of the largest and also one of the cheapest big shows ever organized. It had three hundred horses with it, but they were mostly the size of ponies and not like the big heavy horses circuses carried. Most of the men with the show . . . were all cheap men, satisfied to work for meager wages as long as they were well fed and provided with flashy uniforms." The characterization doesn't suggest an enterprise flush with excessive profits.⁴²

A Panoply of Players

The life and career of William F. Cody has been written about multiple times, yet historians continue to discover and interpret his personal papers and business records. Salsbury left personal papers and a memoir that have been accessed to a limited degree, but comprehensive biographical treatment is lacking. Generally missing in the accounts of Buffalo Bill are perspectives on the

circus men who entered his sphere of activities between 1894 and 1913. Known for their circus ownership or management, little has been said about them as people or their role in Cody's affairs. Through their existence flows the story line that led to the steel circus cars.

James A. Bailey, as the top owner and manager in the 1890s American circus business, wasn't necessarily Salsbury's natural choice to accomplish the conversion of the enterprise to a daily moving aggregation. Adam Forepaugh (1831-1890), another accomplished showman, facilitated the placement of the Wild West into Madison Square Garden during the winter of 1886-1887, but he died on January 22, 1890. Though he certainly knew of and about the shy and retiring Bailey, Salsbury did not initiate any direct contact with him, perhaps out of the fear that he'd have been rebuffed for launching a competing show. That was surely the case in 1893, when circumstances did not exist to support mutual collaboration. It was easier to approach McCaddon, a man who Salsbury knew peripherally and who may have been judged by Salsbury as a readily-available source of the requisite and somewhat proprietary information. There is also no further evidence that Salsbury carried forth on plans to mobilize the 1893 or 1894 troupes until many months later.

By the end of the Wild West's Ambrose Park engagement, circumstances had changed for both principals. Salsbury had taken ill, eventually became an invalid and was generally unable to carry out any Wild West management. By coincidence, Bailey was also in possession of a surplus physical plant at the end of 1894. Joy Kasson wrote that through negotiation Salsbury positioned Bailey as a sub-contractor, which implies that one party worked for the other. We believe that is an inaccurate assessment, both by Salsbury and Kasson. Their contract was essentially symbiotic, neither party could exist without the other and both shared equally in the profits and expenses; success or failure by either party was likely to be experienced equally. The routing was by Bailey or his agents, who determined where the Wild West would go and

when it would arrive, an extremely important function, and provided the transportation to do so. Cody and Salsbury determined what their customers would witness in the arena and how it would be communicated to them in advance publicity materials, and also took care of feeding the employees. The why was to share in the profits and the how was the collaborative contract. Each party had to trust that the other could precisely accomplish its designated and delegated role and perform it without interference or direction from the other. If either failed, they both failed. Salsbury likened Bailey as being a "speculator in the results of the road," but that would have made him an equal speculator with his partner knowing which road to take and when. If Bailey speculated, it was counting on the other side to present an exhibition that engaged the public in a meaningful manner by advance marketing and actual presentation, generating positive press reports that would facilitate a future for the enterprise.⁴³

James A. Bailey.
Pfeiffer Archives.

Of those first years on rails, one of the few insights into the partnership was recorded by McCaddon in a 1904 letter to Bailey in which he sought solace, validation and reacceptance from his brother-in-law for other matters. He stated "I then put in three most trying years [1895-1897] as anyone who was with me at the time can testify, endearing to establish harmonious relations, and if Cody was at times incensed against me for my conduct of your affairs it was simply because I was zealous in your behalf and would not conform to, nor adopt the loose and unbusiness like methods of his people and his listening to the tales of those who were displeased with the dual arrangement; Cody has been good enough to since acknowledge I was right and knew my business."⁴⁴ McCaddon elaborated on his Wild West experiences in his memoir.

"During the first season I had a busy and trying time to combat the influence of the Cody and Salsbury former staff, for they realized if the combination was to continue many of them would be gradually dropped and as Cody was prone to listen to, and believe the tales carried to him." Further, "not any of them from Cody down were in favor of my strict discipline. Especially as regards gambling, drinking etc[.] There was much friction between 'Bailey's men' and those of Cody and Salsbury, and it required all of the first season to bring harmony between the two forces; Cody was always very temperamental (sic) and difficult." A decade later McCaddon was given significant power and he used it, somewhat in retribution, as a means to redirect Cody's lifestyle, generally without success.⁴⁵

The anti-Bailey bias may have been held against anyone who held Cody and his associates accountable. Salsbury was no longer available to serve as a buffer or especially to keep certain staffers in their proper places. Like McCaddon, Salsbury directly identified part of the problem as the people who essentially made their living off Cody. He was of the opinion that "[Major John M.] Burke, and [Jule] Keen and the rest of the



Codyites who have followed the show from the day I took hold of it have never forgiven me for taking the reins of management out of their hands where they had been placed by Cody and Carver." In explanation of their insecurity and tenacity to hold on, he also wrote "The men I speak of were all participants in the failure that followed the first venture by Cody [1883 Cody & Carver] and were retained in the management of the show by me at the request of Cody, who lives in the worship of those who bleed him." The situation sounded like the classic example of a creative yet insecure star, aggrandized to impress the masses, buoyed by self-ambitious fans seeking an identity of

their own and resenting the direction of the star's manager.⁴⁶

These same men, abetted by Cody, were quick to line up against anyone who threatened their own existence as Cody attaches, especially the on-site Bailey representatives, managers including McCaddon (1895-1897), Ernest Cooke (1898-1902?, 1908), and Fred B. Hutchinson (accountant, 1896, treasurer 1898-1902?, manager 1903-1907) and Charles R. Hutchinson (treasurer, 1896). McCaddon, who was Mrs. Bailey's brother, and the Hutchinson brothers, who were Mrs. Bailey's nephews, were part of the management and advance team on Forepaugh in its final years that came over as a group to the Wild West. They were related, they had worked together for several years, knew the rituals of the road and were likely a coherent group that closely protected the interests of James A. Bailey. It's clear that there were two different cultures behind the public face of the Wild West canopy: Bailey's men and their successors; and the Codyites. The former came and went, the latter never really changed.

McCaddon was destined to play an important supporting role in the story of Buffalo Bill's Wild West in the 1890s and a leading part after Bailey's demise. Lacking any close family or sons of his own, Bailey, surely pressured by his wife, was brought to a position of thinking where an in-law with some education could be molded into a reliable and responsible lieutenant. McCaddon came into Bailey's life following the 1868 marriage of his sister to the showman. He traveled to Australia with Cooper & Bailey for 1876-1877, where his consuming devotion to his brother-in-law was evident then and later in his identification as "Joe M. Bailey." In 1878 he traveled with the circus, re-named the Great London, and in 1879 was posted to one of the two advance cars, to learn that aspect of the business, all four years under the tutelage of James E. Cooper. It's unclear where McCaddon spent 1880 to 1883, but in 1884 and 1885 he was assistant treasurer on Barnum & London. In the winter of 1884-1885 he worked as

treasurer for a Hagar and Campbell dime museum in Philadelphia. C. A. Bradenburgh, operator of the former Col. Wood dime museum at 9th and Arch Streets, employed McCaddon at his race track in 1886. That led to his 1887 employment as manager and treasurer of the great, wooden Elephant Hotel at Coney Island, which Bradenburgh controlled after it opened in 1884. That fall McCaddon bought the rights to a melodrama and spent 30 weeks touring with it. McCaddon, Charles E. Kohl and George Middleton (-1926), two men formerly in business with Bailey, bought a Minneapolis dime museum at a sheriff's sale in



Jule Keen was an actor who became treasurer of the Bill show. He was known as one of the "Codyites." Denver Public Library, Western History Collection NS-834.

February 1888. He was involved with it, as well as another museum in St. Paul and a theater there when he was asked by Bailey to rejoin the circus world in 1891.⁴⁷ Adam Forepaugh, another of the greatest circus men of the 19th century, passed away and lacking a suitable successor his show was sold to Bailey via a front man, his former partner James E. Cooper, so that the façade of competition between the two leading circuses could be maintained. McCaddon was recruited to manage the Forepaugh circus when it went on the road in 1891 and remained with it through the last tour of 1894, after which he became Bailey's designated manager on the new Wild West operation. Bailey may not have totally trusted McCaddon alone, as Cooper, James P. Anderson and other experienced hands were involved

with Forepaugh management to assure successful operation. He served three years with Cody, 1895-1897, and then went to Europe in 1898 with Barnum & Bailey. He resigned on January 24, 1904, because he felt that he was inadequately compensated for the work he accomplished, as compared to others who were awarded bonuses. He was conflicted by the devotion he had expressed to his brother-in-law, as compared to the commitment that his brother-in-law had expected to the business. McCaddon proceeded to organize his own European troupe, part circus with a Wild West component, taking it to France in 1905 where he proceeded to jump onto the Wild West's route. McCaddon thought that he could go toe to toe with his brother-in-law's organization, but his outfit quickly came apart amidst bad weather and stiff competition from the Buffalo Bill show. He abandoned the property to a sheriff's sale and the troupers to their own wits. He went to London, where he was eventually arrested for fraudulent bankruptcy, but the charges and extradition to France were eventually squelched. He returned to America in December 1905, broke and a widower, with two sons. It was the nadir of his life, but within five months he rose like the proverbial Phoenix.⁴⁸

Bailey was at home, laid up with a sprained ankle, when he asked through an intermediary for McCaddon to come and see him on the day he arrived home. They quickly patched up any differences, decided on a secret new circus project for 1907 and went to work on it. Within four months, Bailey was dead. Immediately after his funeral McCaddon was placed in charge of all of his show interests by his sister. Via that assignment, McCaddon wielded great power, yet his abilities were sorely challenged when confronted with the superior negotiating ability of the Ringlings and others who had directly earned their standing.⁴⁹

McCaddon realized that he had an ace on staff with Louis E. Cooke as

General Agent for Barnum & Bailey. By reputation, he was the top agent in the American circus business, handsomely compensated for his expertise that paid off directly at the ticket window. McCaddon, who passed out few compliments, wrote that Cooke was "an able and conscientious man and occupied positions of trust with



Loaded flats of the 1908 Barnum & Bailey train. Pfening Archives

Mr. Bailey and his various shows for over twenty years." Salsbury later wrote of Cooke that he was "a good talker and the cleverest man that Bailey ever had in his employ." First a cobbler, then a printer's devil, he worked his way up to newspaper reporter before becoming the advance man for an illusionist, Professor Martino, in 1870. Following a variety of positions advocating ahead of different lecturers and amusements he was hired to be middleman between W. W. Cole's circus and the advance men. His skills caused him to be promoted to higher levels of responsibility with Cole, and later Adam Forepaugh and Barnum & Bailey. He managed the contracting for the Barnum & Bailey show after the return from Europe. McCaddon requested that he also take over the management of the advance of the Wild West when it returned for 1907. The sale of the Greatest Show on Earth to the Ringlings eliminated that responsibility and he remained with the Wild West. Relations between Cooke and Col. Cody seem to have been satisfactory, their friendship dating back many years. Cody and Salsbury usually blamed others for bad routing, even though Cooke was a major player in determining where the show went. After Fred Hutchinson was let go as manager of the Wild West, a rumor went out that he, his brother Charles and Cooke would take out a new circus in 1909, but nothing ever became of the talk. Surprisingly, Cooke's universally acknowledged competency was put to the question by Bailey Estate representatives in early 1909, the surest indication that they had ulterior motives by doing so when confronting Pawnee Bill about him. His services proved quite satisfactory and he served as general agent for Lillie until the Two Bills show was closed. Cooke went into

the hotel business and in 1915 published an incomplete memoir that offers insider insights on several otherwise unexplained aspects of circus history.⁵⁰

The Bailey managers faced Cody and the Codyites every day, but Bailey was insulated by physical distance. If he visited the show on the lot it was not remarked upon. Bailey was personally accorded great respect, his logistical intellect, open communication and genial but rapid fire decision-making not being subject to question. Gordon W. Lillie recalled that "The relations between Cody and Bailey had always been the most cordial and friendly. Mr. Bailey was a great admirer of Col. Cody, always staked him when he was short of money, and in fact was always ready and willing to assist and please him in every way possible."

A healthy relationship also made good business sense. The loss of Cody's good will and services would have replaced the income potential of Bailey's equipment and expertise of a hundred thousand or more dollars with a one-time auction value of perhaps \$75,000.⁵¹

This assessment contradicts a recently published account that states, "Bailey was never a friend." Further, the circus man is taken to task for not publicly linking his name to the enterprise, an usual position since most Cody biographers diminish the role of his partners. The claims that Bailey was "less invested in it," or "had no personal influence over the star" are entirely baseless. One cannot find anything but support from Bailey for Cody during their partnership, and nowhere is there any negative comment by Cody about the circus man. They were

completely different personalities. Cody sought publicity, typical of any performer, while Bailey, the ultimate power behind the scenes, avoided the limelight whenever possible. Everyone who met Buffalo Bill liked him; Bailey was beloved by a close circle of employees but was respected by everyone. The manner in which they managed their money provides a connecting link; Bailey usually had it to loan and Cody was usually in need of it. The issue of Cody's indebtedness to Bailey didn't arise until after the showman's death when McCaddon, perhaps as a personal vendetta and in the interest of his sister, held Cody accountable for his debts.⁵²

Bailey stands tall as one of the greatest proprietors in American circus history, his name surviving today as the least known in the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey title. Menagerie superintendent George Conklin observed that Bailey "enjoyed best being the great silent power that made the show go and grow." Through hard work and careful, informed management he built a triple powerhouse of outdoor show enterprises the likes of which had never been seen before. He took large field shows around the globe, to South America, Australia and Europe, for longer periods than anyone before or since. Bailey occupied the pinnacle of circusdom from the death of Adam Forepaugh in early 1890 until the determined effort of the five Ringling brothers gave them nearly equal standing in 1905. His career from the late 1870s to 1890 was as successful as Forepaugh's. What the Ringlings and their staff did with one circus on one continent, Bailey and his lieutenants achieved with three troupes on four continents. His premature death pushed the Ringlings to the top of the circus world.

Bailey found his calling by actually running away, first to a farm, then to a hotel and finally with the circus. Born James Anthony McGinnis on Independence Day 1847, his early years were an all-too-familiar tale. Of Irish immigrant heritage, both his parents died by the time he was nine,

leaving a significant estate of \$20,000 to other family members to administer. An older brother-in-law named Gordon was appointed his guardian, and he assumed that surname. Gordon's wife, Bailey's older sister, made the drudgery of life in Detroit all the more intolerable with frequent discipline and whippings, with late arrival at school being rewarded with another thrashing. The seemingly endless cycle, which included physical abuse from others, caused him to fake his own drowning, and he simply walked away. This estrangement from his family continued until "Jimmy" contacted and was visited by an older brother named Ned, who had stood up for him, when the Barnum and London Circus played Detroit on July 2, 1883.

After a brief, harvest-time farm career, Bailey became a stable boy for two months at the Hodges Hotel in Pontiac, Michigan in 1859. The next year he ran away with the circus, becoming an advance man under Frederick H. Bailey (1814-1881), whose last name he adopted. His mentor's uncle, Hachaliah Bailey (1775-1845), had owned one of the first elephants in North America, and three of his sons were luminaries in the circus world. Bailey's world was steeped in the lore of the American circus and gave his life a purpose that had been lacking. The boy's self-discipline, intellect, honesty, and yearning for acceptance fired his ambition. The experience of being on the advance of the Robinson and Lake Circus gave him a tremendous understanding of the external factors, such as local economies, weather and transportation, that could make or break a circus season. Service as a sutler's clerk in the Civil War gave him additional experience with provisioning and delivery, staples of circus logistics. It all served him well when James E. Cooper (1832-1892) hired him at high wages to be general agent of his overland circus in 1871. The next year, with George Middleton as his partner, Bailey bought into one of the most profitable areas of the operation, the side show, concessions and the after show, learning firsthand where the real money on a show lot



A horse that smoked could be seen anywhere, but the Bill show stock cars were seldom photographed. Author's collection.

was earned. It enabled him to buy a quarter share in the Cooper circus in 1874. Full partnership followed, as did a two-year tour of Asia and South America, the longest distance ever traveled by an American circus. Acquisition of a pioneering electric arc lighting system highlighted the 1879 tour, and in 1880 Cooper & Bailey's Great London Circus reveled in the display of the second elephant born in America, the first to survive for exhibition. By 1880, P. T. Barnum (1810-1891) readily judged that Bailey was the coming man in the circus field, equaled only by Adam Forepaugh, an independent man of quite different character than himself or Bailey.

With James L. Hutchinson (1846-1910), Bailey's privileges manager, serving as an intermediary extensive secret negotiations began in mid-1880s among Barnum, Bailey and Hutchinson to form the combined P. T. Barnum and Great London Shows for 1881. The partnership created the world's first three-ring circus, the result of a planned one-ring second unit being aborted. Four seasons with Jumbo, the huge African male elephant, as the drawing card followed. The seasons of 1881 to 1884 provided the biggest four consecutive year gross to that time. Physical or mental exhaustion, perhaps a combination of both, caused Bailey to leave the business between mid-1885 and late 1887. Reference was made to his "impulsive mannerisms," but clearly the stress of managing the thousand and one details of the show and his prickly relationship with Barnum were contributing factors. W. C.

Coup, Barnum's partner from 1871 to 1875, had similarly been worn to exhaustion. When Bailey's will was contested in 1906 and his wife's in 1913, extended testimony was offered concerning allegations that Bailey had some undisclosed mental affliction. He wasn't totally dysfunctional during his hiatus from the circus as he built and furnished a substantial new home on St. Nicholas Avenue

in New York City, making 43 changes in the architect's drawings. At the time an observer stated "A long needed rest will doubtless restore him to his old-time ruggedness."⁵³

Bailey's return in late 1887 brought about the creation of the Barnum and Bailey Greatest Show on Earth for 1888. He received a baptism by fire, having to immediately rebuild the menagerie and other parts of the show after a devastating winter quarters fire in November 1887. An engagement at London's Olympia during the winter of 1889-1890 followed. It featured the expansive and costly Kiralfy brothers spectacle "Nero; or The Destruction of Rome," which added an entirely new opera-like dimension to the 1890 and 1891 American tours.

Bailey orchestrated the acquisition for \$160,000 of Forepaugh's circus, America's second largest behind his own, soon after his competitor died in early 1890, becoming its sole owner in 1892. He acquired Barnum's interest in Barnum and Bailey from the great man's estate in September 1894. The documentation suggests a price between \$150,000 and \$200,000. At this time he entered into negotiations with Salsbury that involved him with a third large traveling troupe, Buffalo Bill's Wild West. That was followed by buying into the Sells Bros. Circus in 1896 to which he contributed a title and equipment to create the Adam Forepaugh and Sells Bros. Circus, the second or third largest field show on tour.

Bailey's laconic nature and unhappy childhood manifested itself in his all-consuming focus on business in all of its intricacies, a micro-management style of dealing with issues and a disinterest in any social exchange or entertainment other than his own

circus. He was a guest one day at the elite Savage Club on the Thames in London, among all sorts of cultural lions, when a composer asked him "Tell me Mr. Bailey, do you care for Wagner's Nibelungen Ring?" His response declared his heart's commitment: "The only Wagner I care for is the sleeping car man, the only ring the circus ring." Gil Robinson made a telling remark about his lack of humor and light-heartedness. He recalled that Bailey's response to a bad day's business was to remember trying overland show experiences and "to indulge in the peculiar cackling laugh with which his associates were familiar." Robinson also related other episodes that revealed Bailey's early singled-mindedness in problem solving, and other traits that marked him for later greatness.⁵⁴

While he was alive, printed remarks about Bailey focused on his unexcelled business acumen, his ability to know everything and to grasp every detail from the condition of the soil hauled into Madison Square Garden for the circus to the price of pigs in Chicago that morning. A New York newspaper reporter dubbed him "The Napoleon of show business" in 1884 as he stood amidst the confusion that he carefully assembled into a torchlight circus parade through night-time Manhattan. Bailey was certainly a workaholic; in 1891 he labored from seven to seven. By 1903 he came home by four, dined with his wife, talked and smoked a cigar, then went to the billiard room where he consumed himself in the study of maps, plans and other documents relating to the circus. He once owned some outstanding race horses, but sold them for lack of interest. His one diversion was a pair of Chihuahuas, then a rare breed, with whom he played. When not on tour one day a week was spent overseeing work at the Bridgeport winter quarters. He made all of the purchases for his enterprises. On the lot he had his own office tent from which dozens of telegrams, the e-mail of the day, were sent. He was often seen in front of his tent twirling a silver dollar or perhaps a watch fob, a manifestation of his anxious nature as he critically absorbed everything taking place on the lot before

him. Others remembered a special chair with an attached desk that sat under the main entrance marquee, from which he monitored the front door and continued with his voluminous correspondence. From here he greeted dignitaries, and dispensed free passes, always maintaining control of everything.

Bailey shunned personal publicity and most interviews, but he opened up later, even revealing his own unhappy childhood to some. While his portrait adorned millions of lithographs, quarter sheets and couriers beginning in the last years of Cooper and Bailey, he avoided the company of people other than when discussing business, assiduously avoiding photographers, reporters and unannounced guests. Around the circus, he was very approachable by anyone connected with the firm. He was known to serve up rapid justice when deserved, but was also a strict disciplinarian. It was noted: "He enforces discipline, sobriety and integrity by the power of his own example." If you questioned one of Bailey's decisions, you'd better have a valid point. You always knew where you stood with him; absolute obedience was mandatory or dismissal was assured. In an era when treatment of animals was sometimes suspect one of Bailey's maxims was "Every man should be his own Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals."⁵⁵

The wages he paid were marginal, sometimes none at all if he thought someone could inventively fend for himself, but he would always give a workingman a ride in his carriage and handsomely rewarded exemplary behavior and job performance

Unloading the Buffalo Bill flat cars in 1901. Pfening Archives.



with substantial bonuses. Like the self-made Ringlings, Bailey was frugal with a dollar. He preferred to give or help people to work, by which both were judged to profit. The theft of a large sum of money from his treasury in the early 1880s perhaps made Bailey wary of everyone, as he once remarked to McCaddon and his trusted treasurer Merritt Young. Perhaps one reason why he preferred bachelors in his employ was to safeguard against those who were compelled to "keep up with the Joneses" by outside interests. His method of reward was usually an unannounced surprise contained within an envelope marked "Strictly Confidential." It typically contained one of his personal checks, often for several thousand dollars. After Bailey learned that an old employee had finally bought a home and taken out a \$6500 mortgage, the man carried home such an envelope addressed to his wife. They discovered a check for the full amount. Attempts to express appreciation for such actions brought forth a change of subject. Of honest character, he made good on old bills, even in his younger days. He had detectives around his circus in the late 1870s, and beginning in 1881 hired Pinkerton agents to immunize his operations against illicit activity. Not surprisingly, he readily sacrificed the financial well-being of family, associates and investors, and often put his own security on the line to maintain at any cost the standards that he'd established for his beloved circus. Fred Bradna, the Barnum shows's strict and stiff equestrian director, described him as "Never visibly angry, never known to raise his voice, a 'genius . . . [who] spoke with authority and economy . . . grunting economical answers to all questions."

Circus man Walter L. Main (1862-1950), a slippery operator, had a few dealings with "Jimmy Bailey." "I remember," Main stated years later, "he sold me these two beautiful Bengal [tiger]s for \$300 for the pair, and I kept them for years. . . . While Bailey demanded cash he sold close, and talked and worked fast. Only made one offer. I purchased the tigers

of him in about a minute." What took others a long time to accomplish, Bailey did in moments with a simple one-word response.⁵⁶

McCaddon, his brother-in-law, perhaps knew him better than anyone else. Three decades after Bailey was gone and time had mellowed him, he recalled the essential Bailey: "He was very proud of his good name and credit. Original and independent of men, and no one could divert him from a resolution once formed. A man of great courage. He hated a liar. He could say no without hesitation. His decisions were quickly made. Extremely diffident and although a showman, disliked publicity. His aloof commanding mien inspired confidence. Naturally kind, and had a quick sense of humor. A strict disciplinarian, and a man of few words. He was an inspiring example of the force of personality, a serious reader, a great student, and a scholar, but not a writer. He early impressed upon me, 'It is what a man does and not what he says that counts in business,' and also taught me to remember in our business an old Chinese proverb, 'a picture is worth a 1000 words.'"⁵⁷

Bailey was guarded on the circus lot, where he was exposed, but more forthcoming when he was in his New York office, where access was more controlled. Remarks made after his passing indicate that Bailey relied heavily on a close, trusted circle of top staff and was not only a respected boss, but one sincerely appreciated and well liked by those who were compliant with his lifestyle. He had a paternal affection for his closest associates. In the early 1900s, Bailey had all of his New York office department heads in one open loft room to promote openness and informative, collegial relations, regardless of the visitor or topic. His adjacent office door was always open, except during private conferences. Promptly, at noon, he gathered a dozen or more associates for a walk to a local, high quality eatery, first Burns Restaurant, later the Waldorf-Astoria café, or the Victoria Hotel when the show played the Garden, for a well-deserved respite and animated conversation. His universally-mourned passing brought a change to individual offices; and callers were

required to submit their cards for entry, often dismissed without being met. Bailey also supported several pensioners who had earned his respect through their devotion to his Greatest Show on Earth. His generosity was also felt by those supported when they were ill or injured, a rarity in those pre-benefit days. "Don't dock a man for being sick, he can't help it," was one of his sayings. Press agent R. F. "Tody" Hamilton stated that Bailey "looked upon all his employees as his special charge, and they, in return, swore by him. Their faith in him was and is a testimonial to the worth of a man who rose, unaided, from a bellboy in a country hotel to the proud position of the finest showman in the world." Bailey's only expressed regret on his death bed was that he would not be able to host the annual performance for orphans and the physically challenged on April 17, 1906. It was noted that he personally carried the impaired children to their seats in Madison Square Garden.⁵⁸

Bailey's sole known confidante, the love of his life, was his wife, Ruth Louisa McCaddon (1846-1912), who he met in her father's Zanesville, Ohio, hotel, near to where the circus wintered, in 1867. Upon first encountering her in a hallway and ignorant of her position, he made an errant remark, but not a pass, that caused her to slap him. He learned the error of his ways, wooed and then married her on December 28, 1868. She always traveled with him in the circus business thereafter, first in a carriage in advance of the show, later in an advance car or in their private car. She was called "Aunt Lou" in a 1904 communication from her brother, Joseph T. McCaddon, suggesting an aura of his family's warmth for her. They similarly called her husband "Uncle Bailey," a slight reduction of "Mister" for his nephews. He was always addressed formally as "Mr. Bailey" in public, even by family and partners. One home the Baileys occupied in New York City remains standing, but "The Knolls," the palatial estate they erected on the site of a former nine-hole golf course in Mt. Vernon, New York, was demolished years ago. Likely raised as a Roman Catholic, he seems to have drifted towards the Episcopalian Christ-

ianity practiced by his wife. Although Bailey had explicitly bequeathed his entire estate to his beloved wife, a number of his relatives sued, unsuccessfully, for the breaking of his will once it was entered in probate. Although the story was often told that his estate was between five and eight dollars, the truth is that it was about a quarter of that.⁵⁹

William Frederick Cody was Bailey's antithesis and that may explain why they got along well, presumably respected one another, and evolved a relationship that worked. Circus general agent R. M. Harvey (1871-), personally hired by Bailey and transferred after his death by McCaddon to the Bill show for 1906 and 1907, recalled that Cody "preferred to ride along on the plane of frolicsomeness and let the world take care of itself. He never bothered about finances." The sort of happy go lucky demeanor and conduct noted by Harvey was contrary to the demands that a six days per week, two performances per day schedule imposed upon Cody's life style. Many would consider Cody's actions irresponsible, especially since he was a co-owner and manager of the enterprise. Harvey further characterized Cody as being generous to a fault, in a very positive way, giving away whatever he had to another in need, and usually being in debt to just about everyone. Lillie, reflecting on his 1908-1913 affiliation wrote that "He apparently cared little for money, except when he wanted or needed to spend it. Then, if he did not have it, or could not borrow it, it made him sick—actually sick, so that he would have to go to bed." A summary declaration was made by Lillie many years later, in the same vein, after having lived in the same railroad car with Cody for seven months of the year during five seasons. "He was just an irresponsible boy."⁶⁰ The remarks suggest that Cody had undergone considerable change from the early 1880s, when he made such a specific declaration about his purposeful making of money. Perhaps the huge crowds and the staff that supported his immediate cash needs in a benevolent way into the 1890s had relaxed his attitudes toward the earning of the green. The failure to

achieve a solidified position of security, whether family or financial, despite ever increasing activities and more people in his employ, surely wrought its changes. A changed perspective, acquired through hard knocks, may also have isolated him from the constant demands of speculators, note holders, his money-pit mining and other profitless ventures that were always so close and demanding more cash. By the time he returned from Europe for the last time, money, as a commodity, had largely lost meaning as compared to his health, his desire for internal peace and a less uncertain future.

A primary irritant to Cody, given the above characterization, may have been the basic collaborative contract. It obligated Cody to be on site and part of each and every Wild West presentation. The life it prescribed put Buffalo Bill into the daily travails of traveling show life, an arduous, all consuming existence. Cody was hard at it, riding in the parade, performing twice a day in the arena, as well as dealing with all sorts of visitors, animals, personal needs and other details that required his special attention. There was no such commitment forced upon Salsbury, Bailey or any subsequent ownership partners, who could be elsewhere, tending to other interests or relaxing.

The situation readily established a conflict, making him an owner-performer, a situation that bridged the typical middleman, the staffer or administrator. In the hierarchy of traveling shows, performers came below staffers. The former Forepaugh circus administration, and subsequent managers from the circus world may have had some difficulty in dealing directly with Cody, who was perceived on the lot largely as a "performer," and not an owner per se. Later, given his reduced ownership status resulting from indebtedness to the Bailey side, there may have been an accompanying lowering of respect, further diminishing Cody in their personal valuations. Administrators would have had to overcome the learned, ritualistic mentality of staffers towards performers, "kinkers" in the circus language, to accord Cody the respect

due him as an owner.⁶¹

One Wild West interpreter pointed out, and perhaps rightfully so, that Cody's financial difficulties commenced after Salsbury became disengaged from hands-on management. Further, the point is made that when Bailey died, Cody lost another stabilizing influence, which really exasperated his financial situation. Bailey was replaced by others less inclined to be helpful, more demanding or outright retributive because of past encounters.



Buffalo Bill at the Barnum & Bailey Bridgeport winter quarters. Pfening Archives.

Cody presumably could not monitor his investments, leaving him to rely upon entrepreneurs who didn't always have good sense or his best interests at heart. Obligated to always be on tour, he could not break away to personally investigate suspicious circumstances or audit actual delings. Unfortunately, it also doesn't appear that Cody attempted to enlist anyone as a personal manager or overseer for his various enterprises, which might have gone a long way toward straightening out his personal finances.⁶²

Cody's ceaseless attempts to achieve financial security plagued himself, his partners, and the enterprise that bore his name. It caused him to request revisions to the basic contracts in attempts to stabilize him personally, and thus the Wild West, despite his chronic indebtedness. Fortunately for Buffalo Bill, he was the show's *raison d'être* and single most valuable attraction. He received international acclaim and respect from nearly all people, personally aggrandized and exploited for his personal presence. Had it not been for his truly towering public

personality and the deference accorded to him, his show would have come crashing to an end long before it finally did in 1913.

Margins in the American circus business were slim in the 1890s, largely resulting from the dual effects of the Panic of 1893 and the changing societal appreciation of the circus that perceived it more as children's amusement than serious adult entertainment. Bailey conceived of a scheme to make more money by essentially making his circus public via a British stock corporation, Barnum & Bailey, Ltd., and by taking his circus to Europe for a five year tour, from 1898 through 1902. Some with various axes to grind have alluded to the stock offering as essentially a fraudulent operation. To finance the trip and to provide adequate leadership while he focused on the new venture, Bailey brought W. W. Cole into the ownership of two of his enterprises in 1897. Of all the major players

in the history of the Wild West, Cole's role has received the least examination and interpretation, especially in the accounts by Cody biographers.

William Washington "W. W." Cole (1846-1915) was known for his reclusive, no-nonsense and enigmatic character, his accumulated wealth and little else. He was a fearsome and unseen personality in the business, unknown by sight because his image was never published until his obituary was illustrated with an 1876 image. Though frequently invited to sit for a portrait in later years, he almost always turned away the request with a smile with just one later image known to exist. Cole's legendary demeanor earned him the nickname "Chilly Billy" from associates, but it was not placed in print, as far as is known, until 1907. It was his swan song year in outdoor show business, but the apt nickname has stuck to him ever since it was first broadly popularized via a chapter heading in Earl Chapin May's bungled circus history.⁶³

Cole was a fourth-generation showman, the son of two performers, one a domineering mother who survived the premature loss of her estranged spouse. Cole learned the trade on his step-father's overland show, operating the side show in

1867 and then forming his own wagon circus in 1871. He took his own tickets and watched every detail, ate in the cookhouse with the employees and administered with a flat organizational chart, earning a name for his outfit as the "home show." Cole always sought new territory after taking to the rails in 1873 and often contracted and billed a new town before the railroad tracks had even reached it. Via great skill in routing, advertising and close management he made millions with his circus and subsequent real estate investments. In many ways he was almost a carbon copy of the equally camera shy and studious James A. Bailey, except that Bailey had permitted use of his image and Cole had escaped the hold of the circus.⁶⁴

When James A. Bailey became ill in mid-season 1885, Cole and former Bailey partner James E. Cooper were called upon to purchase and maintain the ailing man's interest in the Barnum & Great London circus partnership. Managing two circuses was too much for Cole, so in November 1886 he sold the bulk of his own profitable railroad circus piecemeal in New Orleans. Cole and Cooper held their share until Bailey recovered and returned to the show in late 1887, at which time James L. Hutchinson also sold out and the circus, owned solely by two men, adopted the familiar Barnum & Bailey title. Thereafter, Cole and Cooper remained accessible to Bailey's tight circle of confidantes and operatives.

Cole first became involved with the Wild West in October 1897, when Bailey sold him a half-interest in the his portion of Buffalo Bill and half of his one-third interest in the two-year old Forepaugh-Sells circus. McCaddon wrote that he did it to "please and assist Mr. Bailey," since his wealth enabled him to retire whenever he desired. He remained in the background, a shadowy figure who generally stayed off the road, away from the shows and in the New York office, but there's no doubt that he was heavily involved with Bailey's holdings and their admin-

istration.

By 1899 he was listed with Bailey as one of the "Directors of Tour," meaning that he and Louis E. Cooke, the General Agent, determined the all-important routing of the enterprise. Beyond the essential transport, it was the most important responsibility delegated to the Bailey interests. Cole retained his position within the Bailey shows until the spring or summer of 1902, selling out after Bailey returned following completion of the engagement at the Salle des Fetes on March 16.⁶⁵ He did not return to active participation until asked to do so by Mrs. Bailey and McCaddon in the fall of 1906, following the death of her husband and dismal financial results for the year. He was elected a director on November 23, 1906, but absolutely refused to travel with any of the troupes that he governed, surely putting him at a disadvantage.⁶⁶ Cooke wrote that he accepted the honor "more as a favor than an inclination," and that he retired again as soon as possible after arranging the affairs in his domain.⁶⁷

Cody's final partner, Gordon W. Lillie was known by Cody and other members of his entourage before becoming a partner and owner in the Wild West. He was also a self-made, hands-on manager who made his personal presence felt directly and immediately. That set him apart from Bailey, Cole and the Ringlings, but since he'd stopped performing

The early Bill show traveled in box or stock cars and passenger cars that looked like this U. S. Army train about 1905. Author's collection.



years before he was still not in quite the same position as Cody. Lillie was both rejected and accepted, admired and appreciated, as well as detested and ignored, depending upon the particular circumstances of Cody and his closest associates. The turmoil was all part of dealing with a figure of national renown like Cody, and an entourage for which he personally provided their livelihood. Lillie outlived most of his contemporaries and thus there are few comments on the record made about him as a person or his business acumen by the people who dealt with him. Some privately remarks have been found, and will be related later.

The profits from the 1893 Chicago engagement, fueled by Americans coming to Chicago for the world's fair, have been specified as between \$700,000 and a million dollars.⁶⁸ The relative success of the 1886 season at Erastina, a summer resort on Staten Island, was not replicated at Am-brose Park, Brooklyn in 1894, which proved to be a bust. Thus, it was with some relief that the first year of the traveling Wild West, 1895, turned over a profit of some half-million dollars. It caused Cody to reportedly boast "We calculate on making \$500,000 every season," which McCaddon, who was there, termed "somewhat exaggerated." The vagaries and challenges of outdoor show business provided no such support even for the best of plans, especially in post-Panic years. There were also related losses, such as the \$78,000 hole caused by the "Black America" tour, as well as Cody's other publically held investments.⁶⁹

The Barnum & Bailey winter season of 1897-1898 and following 1898 summer tour of Great Britain was so successful and James A. Bailey apparently so bright that he realized he could take his circus public. Publically held circuses were almost unheard of in the United States, but the show was in England and the British were always eager investors in American ventures and this was the Greatest Show on Earth.

Barnum & Bailey, Ltd. was organized in April 1899 with a par value of 400,000 British pounds, or approximately \$1,940,000. To whet buyer appetites, Bailey and his associates, who retained one-third of the stock, would not receive any dividends unless a minimum 20% return was first paid on the other shares. Interest among investors in the company was so great that the initial public offering was over-subscribed eight fold. So great was the demand for the stock that the original asking price was increased by a 25% premium prior to its public sale. The principal asset was the Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth, as a going concern. While maintaining control and paying himself a \$20,000 salary as managing director, Bailey was able to not only pull most of his equity out of the circus he had built, but also made a profit on the sale in excess of a million and a quarter dollars. McCaddon said that he received \$1,666,662. It stood as the largest transaction involving a single circus until John Ringling North sold his family circus in 1967 for \$8,000,000 to a privately held corporation.⁷⁰ As circus historian Richard E. Conover rightfully concluded, "This was the master financial move of [Bailey's] career."

Cody & Bailey

Although there is no corroborating documentation, it may have been the vision of another huge stock offering that caused Bailey to contact Cody by August of 1899 to pursue forming a new partnership with him, one excluding Salsbury. As usual, Cody was in debt and it would have been a simple matter for Bailey to convince him that a new partnership was in his best interest. Salsbury had been at home, collecting his share of Wild West profits for doing little work. With Salsbury retired and out of the picture, Bailey could have successfully taken the Cody show public, thereby reaping another grand financial reward. The time was ripe; just six months had passed since the Barnum & Bailey, Ltd. offering had been significantly over subscribed.

There were no missed dividends or



Col. Cody and his partner Nate Salsbury. Author's collection.

other negative news to cause anything but good feelings for a similar stock offering. This one could have gone even better, given the renown of Cody in England. The conceiving of such a plan in Bailey's mind would explain why he offered a proposal to Cody whereby he would pay him \$50,000 immediately and then \$1,000 per week for his services. Bailey would have sold the Bill show, as a going concern, to the new corporation and also delivered up a contract for services from Cody. Such an arrangement would have relieved Cody of the uncertainty of ownership profits and placed him on a guaranteed salary. For Bailey, the arrangement would finally eliminate the constant hassles with Cody as a partner with chronic indebtedness. Cody's immediate circumstances may have weighed in favor of being an employee as opposed to an owner. In his exchanges with Salsbury, apparently initiated by a September 7, 1899 letter and followed up on September 22, Cody played on Salsbury's absence during five years of travel as well as the large loss from the Black America tour. Salsbury, confined at home, was somewhat comfortably provided for by the terms of the 1887 partnership with Cody and the 1894 agreement with Bailey. He blasted Cody, his portrayal of past events and any new deal, holding Cody to the existing agreements. If Bailey

ever had a plan to take Buffalo Bill's Wild West public, it died when Cody and Salsbury met later in New York and resumed their convivial relationship. One can only wonder how Cody's future may have been impacted by the creation of a stockholder-owned Buffalo Bill's Wild West, in light of his past conduct and what eventually happened to Barnum & Bailey, Ltd. Bailey's proposal had a huge impact on Salsbury, who took to writing a memoir that laid bare his life with Cody, providing whatever ammunition would be needed in the event that there was another attempt to break away.⁷¹

In late 1901, the decision was made to return Barnum & Bailey to North America for the season of 1903. The Barnum & Bailey, Ltd. physical plant in Europe, specifically the winter quarters at Stoke-on-Trent and the train of specially built railroad cars, offered a ready means by which another troupe could tour Europe. The obvious choice was Buffalo Bill's Wild West, which would return for the first time since 1892. All it would take to continue the use of those assets would be the agreement of Cody and Salsbury, and the necessary transport financing, as well as the usual rituals of operating a traveling show.

The charge was made by Walsh in 1928, refuted by Don Russell in 1960 and given renewed life by Louis Warren in 2005 that Bailey sent the Wild West to Europe to protect his flagship circus from the competition it represented.⁷² Even on the surface, that claim makes no sense because Bailey had the ultimate responsibility to route both troupes and benefitted from the success of both. It would not have been rational to have used them against one another; that was reserved for competition by other troupes. As a recipient of half the profits, it was plainly in Bailey's best interest to maximize the Wild West revenues.

What is not stated, but what was likely the case, is that from 1895 to 1897 the Barnum show was given

preference over the Wild West in terms of premier territory, such as New York City and Boston, and when it would be played. Clearly, Bailey stood to benefit more from the success of his circus in which he had no partners. That simple fact could not have been lost on either Cody, or especially Salsbury, when they signed the 1894 agreement. Routing was an art as much as a science, and even its best practitioners were sometimes wrong. In certain years the Wild West did better going into a city before the circus, at other times it was best to follow. Even Cody had observed and commented upon that simple fact.

There is also the matter of the American market of 1898-1902 when Barnum and Bailey was in Europe. The Greatest Show on Earth was no factor in North America those years, making the issue of competition from the Wild West moot. The Bill show played the lucrative Madison Square Garden engagement in New York City every spring except 1899 when the Barnum show was aboard. It exhibited in the Garden ahead of the Bailey-controlled Forepaugh-Sells Circus in 1898 and 1901, and followed it in 1900 and 1902, as it had done with Barnum and Bailey in 1897. Bailey received half the profits of the Wild West, but only a quarter of that of Forepaugh-Sells, making it more beneficial for him to favor the Bill show.

Did the Wild West and Forepaugh-Sells overwhelm the Ringling juggernaut? It appears not. The Ringlings did very well when the Barnum show was overseas. While no income and expense figures have been found for Bailey's American shows in 1898 and 1899, it would seem the profits were less stellar because in late 1899 Bailey and others seriously considered reconfiguring Forepaugh-Sells into a larger and higher quality troupe. Simultaneously, the 1898 British tour had been great for the Barnum Circus, but in 1899 profits dropped precipitously to about \$180,000, sliding further the next two years. The value of Barnum and Bailey Ltd. shares plunged. Forepaugh-Sells made modest profits in 1900 and 1901, but then, possibly in response to a rebounding economy, netted a remarkable \$339,048.40



Mr. and Mrs. William F. Cody. Pfening Archives.

in 1902. The Wild West was committed to Europe before the 1902 season started, meaning that Forepaugh-Sells' success that year was not a factor in the decision.⁷³

Taking Buffalo Bill to the continent was likely an attempt to get away from the Ringling show and into a market where Cody had twice been successful. It also took advantage of the relatively new train of cars and the logistical support that remained in place from Barnum and Bailey's tour. Serious thought went into the routing of the Wild West. Countries with broad gauge railroads were avoided, as was Russia, with too many poor people, and Spain with which the United States had recently been at war.

A new contract was signed between Buffalo Bill's Wild West Company and Barnum & Bailey Company, Ltd., as the old contract was phased out on or about January 1, 1903. That was accordingly accomplished on January 9, 1902. Bailey returned to America in March 1902, but the signed agreement didn't prevent all difficulties. In July 1902, George O. Starr traveled back to the America to confer with Cody and Salsbury, with Bailey following later, apparently because issues were raised about the agreement. The discussions were still not satisfactorily concluded because as late as October 9, 1902, Salsbury wrote Cody declaring "in three weeks and a little more we will be done with Bailey and Cole

forever, and a new order of things will begin." By then McCaddon had been directed by Bailey to organize the advance crew and management team for the task. Exactly what plan Salsbury had in mind to sustain the Wild West without the partners of 1894-1902 is unknown and has never been mentioned in any subsequent account.

The new accord was a retread of the 1894 document, with some changes. It provided for a two-year tour terminating about December 1, 1904. The troupe was reduced from 300 to 225, both humans and animals. Changes indicated where there had been past problems with contract shortfalls or transgressions. Each signatory was responsible for delivering his portion of the aggregation to wherever the route would start both years. Barnum & Bailey, Ltd. was required to pay for 50% of the food consumed, as well as half of the horse feed. Other expenses shared equally with Barnum and Bailey included: police and security; two layout men; oil and water for beacons and torch lights; two chandelier men; and the reserved seat and complimentary tickets. The Barnum and Bailey managers were granted unobstructed access to all account books and ticket outlets and "any reasonable requests made by Colonel William F. Cody of the Barnum & Bailey Company Limited are to be obeyed." Cody and Salsbury could use an appropriate portion of the Stoke-On-Trent winter quarters, but were obligated to pay a proportion of the direct expenses incurred on the property. Barnum and Bailey was obliged to transport anything stored at the quarters to and from the location at no cost. Both parties could agree to change the location of the second season from Great Britain to continental Europe. If the London Olympia was available, use of it would assign 100% of the proceeds of any privilege sales to Barnum and Bailey.⁷⁴

Following their meeting, Cody and Salsbury signed a new partnership agreement between themselves on November 6, 1902. The pair apparently needed to put up \$50,000 between them for the trip, likely to transport their personnel and gear across the Atlantic. Since Cody

lacked the funds Salsbury paid the entire amount. Cody was compelled to sign over his stock in their corporation to secure the note.⁷⁵ Whatever distance separated the pair and Bailey (Cole had already sold out) was obliterated. The Wild West presented the last exhibition of the 1902 tour at Memphis, Tennessee on November 8 and then headed back to the Bridgeport winter quarters. The wagons and other equipment had to be taken to New York for loading on board the "S. S. State of Nebraska." On December 26, 1902, two days before Buffalo Bill's Wild West opened in London, Nate Salsbury passed away.

Buffalo Bill's Wild West on Rails, 1883-1902

The enduring significance of Buffalo Bill's Wild West is largely embodied in the story its performers physically told in the arena, and how those actions were interpreted by the publicity agents, lithograph artists, program writers and viewers. But there's also a "back story," the one of the owners, the management and their decisions and activities. A major part of that tale is the account of the train that conveyed the Wild West to its engagements. Beyond what it represented to the daily expense or the capital accounts, knowledge of it defines the size of the enterprise and serves as a benchmark for comparison to other troupes, be it a circus or another western-themed operation.

If the memoir that Louisa Frederici Cody (1844-1921) crafted with the assistance of a circus writer is believable, it was the vision of a train that enabled Cody to think in terms of a traveling Wild West. In an exchange almost too simple to be true, Cody reportedly advised her "Well, the idea is this. All these people back East want to find out just what the West looks like. And, you can't tell them on a stage. There ain't the room. So, why not just take the West right to 'em?" After his wife incredulously and succinctly asked "How?," Cody excitedly replied "On railroad trains! . . . So, together we talked it all over, like two enthusiastic, happy children playing a play-show in the back yard." As she related, his ideas then grew expansively

about how he could take the essence of the West to eastern audiences.⁷⁶ Given that the only other choices in 1883 were an overland wagon train or steamboat, the railroad was the only rational means for cross-country mobilization as envisioned by Cody. The problem was that only one industry, the circus, had developed the technology to any degree. Not even the U. S. Army had reached this level of sophistication during the Civil War.⁷⁷

Then a major error occurs in Mrs. Cody's story line, which causes concern about its general reliability. She continued with how her husband recruited talent, with Doc Carver notably mentioned first, followed by others, and how the first rehearsal took place beside the railroad depot in North Platte. The kicker came with the revelation, "Finally, arrived the time when we all journeyed to Omaha, there to find great railroad cars had been arranged for by Mr. Salsbury and painted with the name of Buffalo Bill."⁷⁸ Carver and Salsbury were mutually exclusive associates of Cody; Carver was there in 1883, while Salsbury was not. Salsbury was there for 1884, whereas Carver was already gone, and the 1884 show opened in St. Louis. About the only conclusion to be reached is that Salsbury had contracted for the cars that moved the show somewhere. The claim of specially painted cars, was likely a well-intentioned thought. The \$10,000 capitalization of the 1883 Cody & Carver enterprise likely didn't include much for painting railroad cars, especially since the two proprietors didn't own any. The 1884 outfit was also marginally capitalized.

The Wild West went on rails for the 1883 season when Cody was in partnership with Carver. Louis E. Cooke, who claimed to have been present at the 1883 Omaha opening, wrote that show moved in regular system railroad cars. At least one newspaper ad stated it traveled on a special ten car train. Courtney Ryley Cooper sized the train at 16 cars, the same number as Walsh and Shirley, who likely relied on his account.⁷⁹ Yost provided a slightly different, but possibly compatible, version, putting the 1883 show initially into six box cars and several passenger cars.⁸⁰ Cody and

Carver could have expanded the company a bit, perhaps to as many as 16 cars as conditions dictated. Car lengths also changed from one railroad to another, and perhaps on the same line if different cars were utilized.

J. O. Jennings, press agent for the 1884 Cody show, stated that the troupe was twice as big as the year before and traveled in 22 railroad coaches. The number may have been correct, but the horses and other stock didn't travel in passenger cars. Another representative, Col. Prentiss Ingraham (1843-1904), the erstwhile dime novelist, told the same newspaper a day later that it was much larger than in 1883 and was on fifteen cars. Finally, on the day the outfit arrived it was described as riding on a special train of seventeen cars. All of these counts could have been right, depending upon the day the count was made. For credibility reasons, it would have been better to relate the same number. Another assessment is found in Blackstone, who set the train at eighteen cars, citing an 1885 newspaper account as her source.⁸¹

A total of 26 cars were contracted to move the Wild West between Washington, D. C. and New York in June 1886. One account stated that Buffalo Bill's Wild West owned a train of cars painted white and lettered in gold that year. Supposedly it also had a canopy top, presumably of canvas, a lighting system and a painted canvas background, or drop. This story has multiple problems. Show railroad cars were generally not lettered in gold, especially by a concern that didn't own them. It was an expensive and difficult application and Cody and Salsbury were not yet flush with excess cash. The canopy system eventually associated with the Wild West genre wasn't devised until 1895 and the concern was booked into venues where grandstand seating already existed. It would seemingly be wise to simply discard the information offered as unreliable, and likely wrong. In 1888, the move from Staten Island to Jersey City, New Jersey required an assembly of forty cars.⁸²

The traveling arrangement cited in Yost is the only marginally descrip-

tive train account that has been found of the Bill show for the years 1884-1894. Nowhere is there reference to the arrival of a circus-like train with its rituals of precision unloading. It does not appear that Buffalo Bill's Wild West was one of the military-disciplined flat-car operations that characterized the leading railroad circuses of the time. Not unlike traveling stage and theater productions, Cody and Carver surely leased a train of system cars, box or stock cars for stock and equipment, with some type of coach or sleepers for personnel, and utilized them to convey their aggregation between the various engagements. With there being no set loading sequence, and with car sizes varying with each supplier, the number of cars was likely to fluctuate.

These "gilly shows," as they were known, facilitated substantial savings in capital investment, but resulted in a higher daily cost. The methodology was like that utilized by the reduced-scope railroad circuses of the 1860s. The Wild West was also a downsized format playing venues with preexisting seating, such as fair grounds and ball parks with grandstands. Advertising in 1885 newspaper declared that it was "Too Large For Any Canvas!" The equipment of the show, largely performance properties, had to be manually handled twice after arrival and twice before departure; first between the box cars and the hired dray wagons and teams that hauled it to the show lot and then off the vehicles and onto the ground where it would be placed and used. The process was reversed for the return to the train. The materials could have been loaded from the side doors of the box cars directly to the waiting drays, or by means of freight platforms, where the cars were spotted by the switching crew. This side loading had also been used by some smaller circuses in the two decades before the Wild West existed. The relatively light Deadwood stage coach was manhan-

dled out of a car and then pulled to the lot by the same team that drew it in the performance. The same was likely done with the low-sided spring platform wagon that was adorned with painted scenes and served in parade as a bandwagon. If there was a mobile camp outfit, with a stove, it may have been the only other necessary wagon. Horses, steers, bison and other quadrupeds were unloaded by ramp from stock cars and were led by halter or herded in groups to the grounds. Show horses could have been placed and tethered in box cars or regular stock cars, or possibly "palace" stock cars, which had an internal feeding apparatus and dividing barriers between adjacent animals and thereby prevented them from injuring one another. Cast and crew members could ride their horse, walk or seek municipal transporta-

leased Wild West cars and others in the yards. The use of system vehicles explains why no photographs of the pre-1895 Buffalo Bill train are known to exist. They simply had no identifying characteristics, markings or title upon them.

Gilly show methodology was probably utilized for all railroad moves by Buffalo Bill's Wild West throughout 1884 (May to October) and 1885 (April to October) and for about two months of 1886 (May and June), as the show moved around the country. There were only five engagement locations in 1887 and 1888 and just one stand in each of 1893 and 1894. The years between these were spent in Europe. There was no need for a substantial railroad car investment as long as the show was not doing one day stands. It would have been a

costly expense to pay demurrage or storage costs for a company-owned train standing unused in a freight yard for months, or years.

The adjective "gilly" may have been derived from the Scottish word "gillie," meaning an attendant or servant. In the vernacular of the business, a "gillie" was someone ignorant to the ways of show



The Barnum & Bailey flats being unloaded in Europe. Pfening Archives.

tion as available. Lodging was in local hotels, where sustenance was likely provided. The people who performed in the Wild West were generally accustomed to living on the land. The city folks who joined them required more formal feeding and accommodations. As they moved from one railroad to another, the cars on which the Wild West rode likely changed, preventing the show equipage from having a sustained identity before the public. A "special train," meaning one not on the regular timetable, may have been the correct terminology, but there was no external differentiation between the

people or specifically "anybody at all outside the circus." It implied that the people utilized to accomplish much of the work, the laborers and draymen, were hired locally, sparing the show from having to hire and retain a large number of workmen.⁸³ "Gillie" had become "gilly" in America long before the 1930s, when an exchange in "The Forum" column of the *Billboard* provided further insight. Wagons that were owned and leased from farmers by overland showmen to aid in making difficult jumps were termed "gilly wagons" because of their outside ownership. System railroad cars leased to haul a circus in were termed "gilly cars" in a circus-issued newspaper of 1904.⁸⁴

Alternately, "gilly" may also have

come from "gill," meaning a pair, or in England two pairs of wheels that conveyed timber. Simple, knockdown wagons, no more than wheel and axle sets with a crude frame connecting them, were sometimes part of the show apparatus, employed to convey properties between the freight yard and the show lot. The dismantling into components enabled them to be readily stored inside the box car hauling the show equipage. They were of the "dead axle" variety, meaning that they had no springs for leveling the platform or absorbing shocks from road impediments.⁸⁵

The big change in Buffalo Bill rail operations occurred in 1895, when it was transformed into a highly efficient organization that moved hundreds of miles six days per week, playing to crowds in a 12,000 seat arena. Cody and Salsbury signed the agreement with James A. Bailey to have him furnish the equipment to transport the outfit. He drew upon two decades of expertise moving his own circuses since 1876. The complete circus train, of the flat car type, first came into use in 1872, with the advent of the Barnum railroad circus. Shows in the 1870s either purchased their own train of cars or rented them from firms that specialized in leasing them, particularly the U. S. Rolling Stock Company. While the Barnum show had substantial profits to draw upon for the investment in its own conveyances, other circus proprietors had to postpone the decision until adequate money was available. In the case of Buffalo Bill's Wild West, capital investment wasn't necessary, nor was a lease, because Bailey already controlled a show property that could be utilized to place the outfit on rails.

The delegation of the transportation logistics to Bailey raises a question about the methodology of travel used by Buffalo Bill's Wild West while in Europe from April 1887 to April 1888 and then again from April 1889 to October 1892. Just four cities comprised the 1887 to 1888 visitation. The next trip was two years of touring, in multiple-day stands, sandwiched between two years of lengthy engagements. Neither justified a large investment in transportation equipment. The methodology of transportation likely contin-

ued that which had been evolved in the United States between 1883 and 1886.

Russell cited Annie Oakley's personal observations from Germany in 1890 or 1891, to support his assertion that the Cody and Salsbury enterprise had already adopted the efficient technology of the American railroad circus for the foreign operation.⁸⁶ Close reading of Oakley's remarks reveals that she did not mention the characteristic "circus style" loading. The multitudinous Prussian guard officers who observed the show logistics monitored manpower (number, organization, duties, task duration, performance) and set-up and tear down on the lot. Of the railroad operation she wrote that they watched "how we [staff, crew and cast] boarded the trains and packed the horses." There was reference to the portable cook ranges, which could have been gillied, but not the loading and unloading of vehicles from flat cars or to the presumed thrice-daily feeding of employees on the lot.

The assumption of flat car style operation also conflicts with other observations. If Cody and Salsbury had applied "railroad circus" practice in Europe, and presumably America beforehand, why did Salsbury later consult with American circus men in 1893 to place the Wild West onto rails? He would already have had the necessary expertise. His illness was upon him, but there would have been others who could have accomplished the details of the task. McCaddon, in relating the request by Salsbury to have Bailey provide the logistical support for 1895 wrote that Salsbury "wished to avoid the trials and tribulations of trying out a traveling show quite foreign to their previous experience." The statement suggests that what transpired in 1895 was substantially different than what Cody and Salsbury had done before.⁸⁷

Further, nowhere is there any reference to a special train of Wild West cars for European travel in 1887, or 1889 to 1892. Adapting system railroad cars to overnight circus moves was an almost impossible task, the difficulties of which drove W. C. Coup, Barnum show manager, to order the first special circus cars after just a few weeks of operation in

the pioneering railroad circus season of 1872.⁸⁸ Later, when Bailey took the Greatest Show on Earth to Europe for five years, 1898-1902, an entire train of special cars was constructed after extensive discussions with railroad officials and builders. Special instructions were printed in different languages to educate European railroad officials and workers about the intricacies of show train operations because of the importance of not missing a single day of exhibition. Photographs, drawings and many other references extensively document the existence of the cars, from builder to demise. There's nothing to record such intensive preparations for the Cody and Salsbury operations of the late 1880s to early 1890s. The same Barnum & Bailey train that carried the Wild West around Europe from 1902 to 1906 probably clouded Russell's analysis of earlier visitations.

Finally, there's no evidence of the Cody and Salsbury enterprise ever having any significant number of show-owned wagons until the association with Bailey was commenced. Flat car operations would have demanded that they have an entire fleet of vehicles, but the record, both written and photographic, provides no confirmation whatsoever of any vehicle other than the famous Deadwood stage. It was adequately light to have been managed in and out of a box car. Images of pre-1895 cookhouse and ticket wagons, the most essential to the operation, are unknown. In the author's opinion, the more logical conclusion, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, including photography, is that the Wild West continued with a gilly show operation that involved the use of conventional European railroad cars and technology.

A clue as to the train utilized during the first two European tours was provided by Salsbury in an unpublished memoir. Looking forward to the daily traveling tour of 1895, Salsbury wrote "My plan for the coming season was to go on the road with a plant the same as we used in Europe and Great Britain." While one might conclude that it was a circus-style flat car operation, Salsbury offered no clarifying remarks.⁸⁹ Fortunately, a recent English volume

provides some insight into the British travel. The trains that delivered the Wild West to the Alexandra docks at Hull in 1888 were furnished by the Hull, Barnsley and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Company. One set of cars hauled the "non-live properties including the Deadwood Stagecoach." No mention was made of other vehicles. Another train conveyed the horses, bison and elk. No mention was made of the personnel of the show, which presumably traveled in conventional coaches or sleeping cars between Manchester and Hull, where one final exhibition was staged. It was likely a repeat of the gilly operations undertaken previously in America.⁹⁰

For the 1891 British tour, a train of cars was furnished to the Wild West by the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, which carried it from Grimsby, Lincolnshire to the first engagement at Leeds. Forty-seven stock and flat cars, split into three sections, served to convey the stock and apparatus. Again, no mention was made of the staff, cast and crew, which likely rode the rails by conventional means. No doubt similar arrangements were made with other carriers throughout England and continental Europe for the transport of the show.⁹¹

Bailey framed the 1895 Buffalo Bill's Wild West physical plant at Philadelphia, the former winter home of his defunct Adam Forepaugh circus. McCaddon stated that he was personally in charge of the conversion of the circus property. Prepared for a new application was a sound, albeit dated, set of railroad conveyances and wagons. Some of the Buffalo Bill cars, like the 45-foot advertising car, dated back to Forepaugh's original 1877 car order to Barney & Smith of Dayton, Ohio. Other 40-foot elephant, stock and flat cars were augmented by later orders filled by Allison & Co. of Philadelphia (1881) and modern 60-footers from Barney & Smith, supplied sometime before 1889. Bailey may also have utilized other cars cast off from the Barnum & Bailey show as it upgraded in the early 1890s. Cole didn't sell all the equipment of his 1886 circus and some of it ended up at the Bridgeport winter quarters, with a couple items merged into the Wild

West train when it wintered there the first time, during the winter of 1895-1896. At least one 1896 Buffalo Bill advertising car originated with the W. W. Cole circus.⁹²

One of the few photographs of the firm's stock cars shows them to have been a rather motley bunch of conveyances, most appearing to be old Forepaugh cars. Their short length is evident in an image taken sometime 1895-1900 and printed in the 1901 Bill show courier. Two other images, likely taken in early spring of 1900 at the Bridgeport winter quarters by New York photographer Joseph Byron, record some of the same cars as well as other stock, box and flat cars.⁹³

In addition to a reworking of the Forepaugh train cars, a fleet of several dozen baggage wagons had to be adapted to haul the Wild West canopy, seating and other performance apparatus. Few images have



survived of any 1890s vehicles bearing the Buffalo Bill title. In an economy move, perhaps only the ticket and office wagons were painted with the title. Only two Forepaugh parade wagons, an elaborate 1870s Fielding Bros. bandchariot and a tableau bandwagon, created by out of the lower part of a former 1880s W. C. Coup organ wagon, went into the expanded Wild West street parade. Both carried a portion of William Sweeney's band. As part of the performance obligation, two wagons were fitted up at Ambrose Park by Salsbury to haul the steam-powered electrical generators that provided electrical power for the night show illumination. Replacing the gigantic power plant installed at Ambrose Park in 1894, they were so novel that the special conveyances fitted with General Electric-supplied equipment also went into the daily street parade. They were named for Cody and Salsbury. The remainder of the Forepaugh parade wagons were dis-

persed to other Bailey properties, sold or junked. The Forepaugh menagerie and side show apparatus were not utilized.

Simultaneous with the formation of the Wild West in Philadelphia, McCaddon supervised the preparation of a 15 to 20-car train in the Bridgeport winter quarters that conveyed the ill-fated Cody & Salsbury Black America troupe in 1895. The tour was under Salsbury's direction, a somewhat surprising turn of events since an unspecified illness had kept him from organizing the Wild West logistical plan and executing it. Nowhere is there a disclosure that differences between him and Cody caused Salsbury to step aside, nor is there any indication that the magnitude of the Wild West mobilization had scared him. His execution of foreign tours, installations that seated tens of thousands of people and so on all would suggest that he had the

Buffalo Bill in Paris, France in 1905. Pfening Archives.

requisite skills and capability. McCaddon wrote of the Black America set-up, "They were not organized or fully equipped for a traveling exhibition." In an exchange cited by Kasson, Cody blamed Salsbury for the \$78,000 loss incurred by the new show, while Salsbury responded that the loss would have been minimized had he not been compelled by Cody to keep it on tour. The issue lingered for at least four years between Cody and Salsbury.⁹⁴

Walsh quoted Cody as stating that the 1895 Bill show traveled on 52 cars, which appears to be reasonably accurate. An 1895 Buffalo Bill herald confirmed this figure and stretched the truth a bit by stating "Travels in its own railroad trains! 52 cars of the largest size, latest make and modern equipmnt." Walsh further claimed that it was ten more than Barnum &

Bailey and 14 more than Ringling Bros., numbers that have been accepted as meaning that the Bill show was physically larger than either of the two circuses. Barnum & Bailey had already been on 60 cars by 1888 (with four in advance) and continued in that configuration until departing for Europe after the 1897 tour. Ringling was then moving on about 44 cars (with three in advance) and was expanding each year. It is also likely that the Barnum show cars were nearly all 60-footers, while the Ringling show had a mixture of car lengths, as did the Bill show, some of the older ones measuring just forty feet long. The disparity in car lengths becomes something of a wild card when attempting direct analysis.

The fundamental insight that Walsh and derivative works failed to recognize was that both circuses had many more parade wagons, a substantial menagerie and a side show, requiring numerous baggage and cage wagons. The baggage stock, the elephants, the lead stock (camels, zebras, other beasts) and the associated personnel represented a large percentage of the enterprise, about 35% of the train content. Reducing the 60 cars of the Barnum show train by that ratio yields a comparative figure of 39 cars, 13 less than the Bill show, perhaps providing truer meaning to Cody's seemingly erroneous comparison. In terms of audience capacity, the Barnum circus and the Bill show may have been essentially equivalent at ten to twelve thousand seating capacity, with additional revenue possible with the circus because of the earning potential of the side show, after show and concessions.⁹⁵ There is no rigorous comparison between circus big top and Wild West canopy seating capacity available. The largest big tops of the 1890s likely seated about ten to twelve thousand people. One media report on the new 1895 Buffalo Bill's Wild West claimed that it would seat 18,000 people in the grandstand, a crowd larger than any under canvas audience in circus history. We suspect two-thirds that number would be more accurate. McCaddon stated in his memoir that it held 12,200

spectators.⁹⁶ The set up used on the 1902 outfit had an estimated seating capacity of 12,500, according to the route book.

The Wild West train moved in two sections, known because incompetent railroaders caused a wreck in 1896 during the "doubling" of the first section over a steep hill. The railroad's error resulted in the destruction of five flat cars and eight vehicles, with damages to four sleeping cars. "Doubling" split the section in half, enabling the same locomotives to move each portion safely over the mountain gradients before reconnecting them.⁹⁷ A Buffalo Bill inventory from between 1896 and 1898 details the train to have been 50 cars and in two sections. It included three advertising cars, fifteen stocks and 21 flats (all claimed to be 60-footers), a privilege car, a storage car, eight sleepers and a private car. Fifty-nine different vehicles (wagons, carriages, stagecoaches, prairie schooners and a buggy) loaded onto the flats.⁹⁸

Cody's private car bore the number 50, according to entries in the 1899 and 1900 route books. In addition to accommodations for Cody, the show's top managers may have been given quarters within it, as well as a few select agents of Cody's choice. While the other show sleepers each were served by a porter, Cody's had a porter and a cook. A photograph exists that documents this car, or a replacement, used 1900-1901, with two white jacketed gentlemen beside it.

When Barnum & Bailey embarked

The Buffalo Bill advertising car in Marseilles, France, October 28, 1905. Pfening Archives.



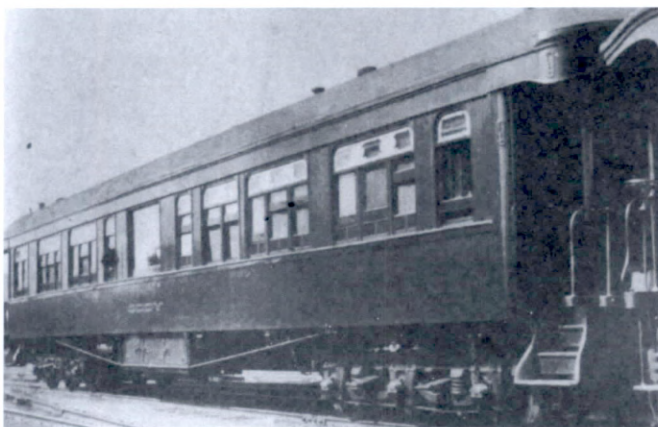
for Europe in late 1902, the 60-car train that had transported the circus in America remained behind, parked at the Bridgeport winter quarters. There is some reference to it remaining intact in late 1899. At that time it was considered for an expanded Forepaugh-Sells troupe, that would be renamed Barnum & Bailey. Those plans came to naught.⁹⁹ One finds it hard to accept that an asset as valuable as sixty railroad cars, likely worth \$75,000 or more, remained mothballed for five years. Perhaps Bailey liked to keep his options open, in the event that the European tour collapsed.

What causes us to be suspicious about their continuing storage are photographs of the Buffalo Bill flats, taken circa 1902, showing relatively modern cars. They could have been some of the later Forepaugh 60-foot cars. A changeover from the shorter (40, 45, 55 foot) and vintage Forepaugh cars to the newer and longer (60-foot) Barnum vehicles would conveniently explain the decrease in Bill show train size. The nominal 50-car train of 1895-circa 1898 was reduced to 42 or 43 for 1899 to 1900. Utilization of the longer Barnum show cars, then in storage, would explain the smaller number of cars. It's possible that the show was actually reduced in size or that some new cars were acquired as replacements. Unfortunately, the record is silent on all these possibilities. The physical plant remained stable for at least the last four years Barnum and Bailey was in Europe.

The Bill show continued to move on a forty-two car train in 1899 and 1900. It consisted of fifteen stocks, sixteen flats, nine sleepers and two in advance. A report in the July 30, 1900 *Detroit Free Press* placed 22 cars in the second section, of which four were sleepers and one the railroad's caboose. In 1901, the second section was involved in two mishaps. On June 1, while running in fog seven miles east of Altoona, Pennsylvania, it ran into the rear of the first section. Four sleepers and two stock cars were destroyed.¹⁰⁰ That was followed by a head-on collision resulting from a misunderstanding in train orders

near Lexington, North Carolina, on October 29. The number of horses and mules killed totaled over 110, suggesting that at least three or four stock cars were involved in the destruction.¹⁰¹ The firm traveled on 41 or 42 cars in two sections, with two in advance in 1902 (seven stocks, ten flats and four sleepers in the first; eight stocks, seven flats and five sleepers in the second). Two advertising cars were noted in the route book, but there was a trade news report of a No. 3 car in July, suggesting one was added or there was a quirk in numbering.¹⁰² Some claimed it to be larger than the 61-car Ringling show, perhaps because the former was moving on 60-foot cars whereas the latter still had short cars in the train. It may also have been recognition of the missing menagerie, because by this time there was a side show on the Wild West. Surprisingly, the same report placed Forepaugh-Sells at 68-cars, larger than even Barnum & Bailey when it last toured the U. S. in 1897. Perhaps some of the cars stored at Bridgeport had been shipped west to augment Forepaugh-Sells.¹⁰³

The private cars that conveyed William F. Cody around the country have provoked some interest. Unfortunately, almost every account of them is riddled with inaccuracies. The earliest is mentioned in tertiary sources for 1895, but primary confirmation is lacking until a few years later. Yost wrote that upon the death of P. T. Barnum (April 11, 1891) Cody purchased his private car, using it while he was on the road. The car reportedly burned at the "New Haven" winter quarters in February 1900, replaced by a car once used by Adelina Patti.¹⁰⁴ In 1891 and 1892 Cody toured his show in Europe and had no need for a private car back in America. The season of 1893 was spent entirely in Chicago and that of 1894 in Brooklyn, again negating the need for a travel vehicle. It would seem that the claim is further subject to suspicion because no reference has been found to Barnum owning any railroad car other than those that hauled the circus bearing his



The former Adelina Patti car and its immediate predecessor had a distinctive arched roof rather than the usual clerestory design. Denver Public Library, Western History Collection NS-643.

name, with which he seldom traveled.¹⁰⁵

As the owners of the Wild West train, Bailey and Cole lost Cody's private car when the railroad car shop at the Barnum & Bailey winter quarters in Bridgeport, Connecticut burned on January 19, 1900.¹⁰⁶ It was likely the one previously described as number 50 and of which an image exists; no prior history is known. The Wild West advertising cars were also lost in the same conflagration and replacements had to be obtained.

The replacement was the private car "Mayflower," originally built for the Mann Boudoir Car Company sometime in the 1880s. It was named the "R. C. Flowers." As with other Mann cars, it had an unbroken, arched roof instead of the usual clerestory, giving it a distinctive external appearance. It was converted to another floor plan in August 1886 and then acquired by the Pullman Company in 1889. As the "Mayflower" it was sold to Bailey and Cole in March 1900, to serve as Cody's private car.¹⁰⁷ Cody was ensconced in it by May of 1900, when a friend reported to the hometown newspaper in North Platte that Cody was very pleased with it.¹⁰⁸ It served him for just two seasons, perhaps because by that time it was well worn.

For 1902 Cody was furnished with a true, but aged "palace on wheels," the "Adelina Patti," reportedly the

most sumptuously appointed private car ever built. It was constructed at a cost of \$40,000 in 1883 by the Gilbert Car Works of Troy, New York, as a Mann Boudoir Car to transport the noted singer. Following use by the famed singer, it was renamed the "Adelaide Moore" in 1886 in honor of the next prima donna to utilize it. The car was

sold to the Pullman Company in 1889 which renamed it the "Coronet," later selling it to Fitz-Hugh & Co., a car leasing firm that supplied sleepers to circuses and other traveling show companies. Pullman sold it in December 1901 to Bailey, who provided it for Cody, renaming the car in his honor. Cody used the car throughout 1902, and again from 1907 to 1909, after his return from Europe. It also conveyed both Cody and Gordon Lillie during the initial year of the Two Bills show. Lillie recalled in extended remarks that his partner was quite taken with the multiple mirrors throughout the interior of the Patti car.¹⁰⁹

Ralph Barger reported the "Adelina Patti" car was destroyed in a Wild West wreck at Lowell, Massachusetts in 1906, but that is not possible. The Cody show was then in Europe. The Lowell wreck took place in 1911, at which time Cody and his partner, Lillie, were sharing accommodations in a different private car. A railroad trainmaster had cautioned Cody during 1909 that he and Lillie lived in the oldest car in their train, the 1883 Patti car, which would be destroyed by the other, stronger cars in the event of a wreck. Lillie thereupon purchased one of two specially built party cars of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which because of their partially wooden superstructure saw restricted duty. It was extensively modified by the two Bills, with two additional compartments for guests. It likely served them through 1913. The disposal of the 1883 Patti car is unknown.¹¹⁰

The show cut short its 1902 tour and prepared for relocation to Europe, where it remained through 1906. Following the departure of the

Wild West and the return of Barnum & Bailey to North America, the Greatest Show on Earth resumed the use of its former train. Show managers ordered a number of new railroad cars from the Barney & Smith Car Company, four 80,000 pound capacity stock cars and a 30-ton rated flat car in 1902 and two additional flats in 1903. The 1902 vehicles, ordered by Bailey and Cole, might have gone into the Buffalo Bill train.¹¹¹ Other, newer railroad cars may have been transferred from the Forepaugh-Sells show, which no longer served as Bailey's domestic flagship and thus could be reduced in size. We suspect that the older Wild West train, comprised of former Forepaugh and W. W. Cole circus cars, was retired and stored at the Bridgeport winter quarters.

Presumably the oldest pieces were sold off or scrapped, with only select vehicles mothballed and held against future use.

NOTES

1. For railroad circus background, see the author's four-part "The Development of the Railroad Circus," commencing in *Bandwagon*, November-December 1983.
2. For the various circus train posters in this discussion, see Fred D. Pfening, Jr., "Circus Train Lithographs," *Bandwagon*, November-December 1971, pages 16-18.
3. Ad in Detroit (MI) *Free Press*, August 26, 1984.
4. John H. White, *The American Railroad Freight Car*, (1993), page 597.
5. *Bandwagon*, December 1961, page 17. The Havirland lists do not include the numbers for the Bulger & Cheney circus, about a six car operation. We also did not include the acknowledged mid-season 11-car increase in the size of one circus because the car types were not defined. Just before the 1911 tour, the Pennsylvania Railroad announced the number of circuses and Wild West shows

The Buffalo Bill loaded flat cars in Italy in 1905. Pfening Archives.



that would be traveling on its tracks. They enumerated twenty circuses with a total of 496 cars and two Wild West shows with 69 cars, for a total of 465 vehicles. These totals include not only stock and flat cars, but also show sleepers and advertising cars. Though the numbers are different in detail, they are of the same order of magnitude for the main point of the discussion. See "Circus Cars Announced," *Billboard*, April 15, 1911, page 28.

6. White, pages 580-598, presents a complete discussion of the transition from wooden to steel cars.

7. Harry Parrish, "Transporting A Big Circus; Precautions Necessary," *Billboard*, March 19, 1910, page 22.

8. Thaddeus H. Gerig letter printed in "The Forum," *Billboard*, February 15, 1936, page 28. Gerig was a minstrel show manager and a partner in the Rhoda Royal Circus from 919 to 1922. He was also a well-known grifter using the name Harry "Kid" Hunt.

9. *Billboard*, June 6, 1914, page 20.

10. *Billboard*, September 12, 1914, page 21.

11. Joy S. Kasson, *Buffalo Bill's Wild West* (2000), page 34, which cited a February 12, 1883 contract. Nellie Snyder Yost, *Buffalo Bill, His Family, Friends, Fame, Failures, and Fortunes*, (1979), pages 126-136, has other versions of the formation of the show and the capital invested.

12. William E. Deahl, Jr., "A History of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, 1883-1913," Ph. D., Southern Illinois University, 1974, pages 9-13. Hereafter cited as Deahl.

13. Richard J. Walsh, *The Making of Buffalo Bill* (1928), page 228; Glenn Shirley, *Pawnee Bill, A Biography of Major Gordon W. Lillie*, (1958), page 98; Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill*, (1960), page 297.

14. Deahl, pages 14 and 16.

15. Gil Robinson, *Old Wagon Show Days*, (1925), pages 131-132. Only part of the 1883 Robinson route is available: May 17, Chillicothe, MO; May 25, Fremont, NE; June 2, Norfolk, NE. The dates, places and directional path are adequate to conclude that indeed the Robinsons had been in the vicinity of Omaha when Cody & Carver opened.

16. Deahl, page 13.

17. Walsh, page 232; Louis S. Warren, *Buffalo Bill's America*, (2005), page 229 and note 67.

18. Buffalo Bill, *The Story of the Wild West and Camp-Fire Chats*, (1888), page 694.

19. *Helena (MT) Independent*, March 27, 1883, courtesy Judith L. Griffin.

20. Buffalo Bill, *Story*, page 699.

21. Contract transcribed in Sarah J. Blackstone, *The Business of Being Buffalo Bill, Selected Letters of William F. Cody*, 1879-1917, (1988), pages 103-104.

22. Deahl, pages 47-55.

23. Walsh, page 264; Russell, pages 326-327. Maeder, whom Russell (page 206) identified as a theatrical agent and manager, was the brother of Frederick G. Maeder (1840-1891), an actor and playwright who dramatized Ned Buntline's "Buffalo Bill, King of the Border Men." Milner may be listed in the 1900 census as a 44-year old, Ohio-born cattle rancher in Chouteau County, Montana.

24. Deahl, page 75, quoting the *New York Times*, August 12, 1888. In comparison the Barnum and Bailey Circus in 1888 had revenue of just over a million dollars and a profit of \$200,000. See A. H. Saxon P. T. Barnum *The Legend and the Man* (1989) p. 311.

25. Deahl, page 82.

26. There's a very tertiary reference to Apache Harry's Original Wild West Show, for Saturday, July 14, 1883, the only other enterprise that may have been active the same year as Cody & Carver. The suspect image is in the Bettmann Archive.

27. This enumeration of Wild West enterprises is based upon the Col. C. G. Sturtevant list of shows, serialized in *White Tops*, starting with XXXV, 6; entries in Don Russell, *The Wild West* (1970) and newspaper advertisements in a variety of private and public collections. Also see Paul Reddin, *Wild West Shows*, (1999).

28. Quoted in Walsh, page 239, and Deahl, page 13.

29. 1884 Sells Bros. Circus Route Book, page 39.

30. Further background on the various partnerships and transactions can be found in Russell; Richard E. Conover, *The Affairs of James A. Bailey* (1957); Shirley; and Kasson. Subsequent tertiary coverage is typically derived from these volumes or the primary and secondary resources that they enumerate.

31. Louis E. Cooke, "Reminiscences of a Showman," *Newark (NJ) Evening Star*, July 29, 1915.

32. Russell, page 288, places the meeting as 1876, but Cooper & Bailey toured Australia only in 1877 and 1878. McCaddon specifies their meeting as taking place at Sydney during the winter of 1877-1878.

33. Joseph T. McCaddon memoir, (circa 1938), pages 701-702, Bridgeport Public Library, transcription courtesy Judith L. Griffin. The document has infrequent pagination.

34. Letter from Joseph T. McCaddon to

James A. Bailey, June 16, 1904, McCaddon Papers, Princeton University Library, transcript courtesy Richard Alexis Georgian.

35. McCaddon Papers, courtesy Fred D. Pfening III.

36. *Leavenworth (KS) Times*, October 9, 1881. Russell, page 257, sets Cody's 1876-1877 stage tour earnings at \$13,000. Walsh, page 211, provided a figure supplied by John M. Burke, indicating that in seven years on stage Cody had earned \$135,000. That is slightly less than \$20,000 per annum average was usurped in 1879-1880, when he claimed to have made a profit of \$1,400 per week over 36 weeks, and \$1500 per week for 34 weeks in 1881-1882. See Sandra K. Sagala, *Buffalo Bill, Actor: A Chronicle of Cody's Theatrical Career* (2002), pages 209 and 239. The numbers provide a benchmark of comparison for his subsequent Wild West income.

37. Walsh, page 308. The author compressed several of Walsh's sentences into the quoted phrase, with his meaning maintained. Walsh went on with a rather complimentary description of Bailey's single-minded, financial focus.

38. William F. Cody to Frank Cody, August 27, 1912, Blackstone, *Letters*, page 56.

39. Mileage data is in the 1900 Buffalo Bill's Wild West Route Book, page 161; 1902 Buffalo Bill's Wild West Route Book, page 27; and *Variety*, November 28, 1908, page 11. Data for 1901 and 1907 were not readily available.

40. Walsh, pages 335-336.

41. Dexter Fellows and Andrew Freeman, *This Way to the Big Show*, (1936), page 117. Fellows had previously served Pawnee Bill's Wild West and later Barnum & Bailey, which were also free of any show-sanctioned grift.

42. R. M. Harvey, "Some Inside Facts About Buffalo Bill's 'Wild West,'" reprinted from the *Perry (IA) Daily Chief* in *Bandwagon*, January-February 1959, page 13. Harvey's remarks were composed after years of service with Barnum & Bailey and Hagenbeck-Wallace, circuses having some of the finest of baggage stock.

43. Kasson, page 144.

44. Joseph T. McCaddon to James A. Bailey, June 16, 1904, McCaddon Papers, Princeton University Library, transcript courtesy Richard Alexis Georgian.

45. McCaddon memoir, pages 704-705. The publication Walsh's *The Making of Buffalo Bill*, (1928), upset McCaddon, who excised and critiqued passages from it and then provided his own alternative or expanded observations. The citations date portions of McCaddon's memoir to the last decade of his life.

46. Russell, pages 301-302. Burke must have been one of the Codyites that the Bailey Estate Trust representatives particularly disliked. He became a pivotal figure in the events that led to the sale of the final Bailey interest in the Wild West in early 1909.

47. McCaddon's career was established from references throughout his memoir.

48. See John F. Polacsek, "The McCaddon International Circus of 1905," *Bandwagon*, September-October 1982, pages 13-20. Bailey had similarly abandoned a teenaged McCaddon and many other employees in South America in November 1878.

49. No comprehensive biography exists of McCaddon. The personal memoir that he penned in the last decade of his life must be cautiously interpreted. The papers that McCaddon saved from his own career, as well as those that he acquired upon Bailey's passing, were gifted in 1938 to the Princeton University Library. Unfortunately, a second, large cache of highly important papers was withheld by the family and were sold piecemeal at auction to a variety of public institutions and private collectors in 1979, with the memoir being sold by private sale in 1986.

50. Cooke's life is profiled in William L. Slout's *Olympians of the Sawdust Circle*, (1998), page 59 and his *Chilly Billy, The Evolution of a Circus Millionaire* (2002), pages 129-131. The Salsbury quote is in Kasson, page 146, McCaddon's is in his memoir. *Variety*, January 11, 1908, page 10.

51. R. L. Wilson with Greg Martin, *Buffalo Bill's Wild West: An American Legend*, (1998), page 192.

52. Warren, page 494.

53. The oft repeated story of the 1880 Great London baby elephant birth causing the combination was largely press agent hype, and given broader circulation when a faux baby elephant was aggrandized with Barnum & Bailey for 1908, and again in Earl Chapin May's *The Circus From Rome to Ringling*, (1932). Even worse is the statement by Walsh (page 309), "in 1880 [Bailey] forced a partnership on Barnum." *New York Clipper*, August 29, 1885, page 380.

54. *New York Herald*, April 15, 1906, courtesy Judith L. Griffin; Robinson, page 48.

55. *New York Dramatic News*, January 17, 1891, page 12, and *New York Times*, April 19, 1881, both courtesy Judith L. Griffin; *Cleveland Leader*, May 24, 1903, courtesy John F. Polacsek. Bonafide photographic portraits of Bailey exist, including several before 1888 and at least two others taken about 1891 and 1903. Although Bailey challenged photographers, as when he tried to spoil a candid shot at the Forepaugh-Sells sale, it appears he was photographed several times between 1900 and his death. An image taken next to a Barnum and Bailey ticket wagon by Frederick Glasier, later sold by Charles Bernard, is the best-known candid view of him, but others exist. *New York Herald*, April 15, 1906.

56. *Mt. Vernon (New York) Argus*, April 13, 1906, courtesy Judith L. Griffin; *Greater Show World*, March 14, 1931, page 12.

57. McCaddon memoir.

58. See *Variety*, January 19, 1907, page 10 and February 9, 1907, page 9; *New York Times*, April 12, 1906, and *New York Herald*, April 15, 1906, courtesy Judith L. Griffin.

59. The mystery of Bailey's identity and early life is explored in Arthur Saxon, "New Light on the Life of James A. Bailey," *Bandwagon*, November-December, 1996, pages 4-9. He relied heavily on the McCaddon memoir. The essentials of his circus career are covered in Richard E. Conover's *The Affairs of James A. Bailey*, which was largely based on Bailey's papers in the McCaddon collection. Personal assessments of Bailey by his employees include George Conklin, *The Ways of the Circus*, (1921), pages 295-302; Fellows, pages 183-184; and Fred Bradna, *The Big Top*, (1952), pages 22-52. See John Lentz, "The Battle for Bailey's Bounty," *Bandwagon*, July-August 1978, pages 17-18.

60. Shirley, page 211.

61. The term appears in a 1890s Ringling route book, along with other slang. It presumably was derived from warm-up exercises that would take the "kinks" out of acrobat's joints.

62. Kasson, pages 144 and 149.

63. *Variety*, August 17, 1907, page 12.

64. Conklin, page 304.

65. *Billboard*, August 2, 1902, mentions the sellout.

66. *Financial Times*, October 23, 1907.

67. Cole's family, beginnings and career in the circus through 1886 are thoroughly detailed in Slout's *Chilly Billy*. An assessment of his activities as part of the Bailey organization from late 1885 through 1908 has yet to be undertaken. It is briefly outlined in Conover's monograph on Bailey. Cole became the richest of circus men, his estate being worth in excess of \$5,000,000, much of it in New York and Chicago real estate. Additional insights are in Louis E. Cooke, "Are You Hepp?," *New York Clipper*, February 15, 1913, page 10. See *Billboard*, March 27, 1915, page 48 and McCaddon memoir, page 705.

68. Russell, page 375.

69. Walsh, page 310; McCaddon, page 709.

70. Bailey's profit multiplier was equaled in 1971, when Ringling-Barnum was sold again for Mattel stock worth \$47,000,000, minus the concessions. Thereafter, when it was taken public by Mattel, stockholders won a \$30,000,000 settlement after charging the value of the initial public offering had been fraudulently overstated. Bailey was fortunate that no Englishman made the same charge. The next largest sale was that of five circuses comprising the former American Circus Corporation, bought by John Ringling on August 30, 1929 for \$1,700,000.

71. Kasson, pages 146-148, provides the basis of the proposed 1899 change in the Cody and Salsbury relationship, but did not connect it with Bailey's six-month old stock offering. The Salsbury memoir

is with his papers at Yale University.

72. Walsh, page 330; Russell, pages 439-440; and Warren, page 524. Walsh seems to have resented that Cody's chronic indebtedness cost him control and that good business practice caused notes to be signed by Cody for his debt.

73. The explosive Ringling growth and profitability leading to 1898 is charted in Jerry Apps, *Ringlingville, U. S. A.*, (2005), page 77.

74. McCaddon collection.

75. Kasson, page 149.

76. Louisa Frederici Cody with Courtney Ryley Cooper, *Memories of Buffalo Bill*, (1919), pages 281-283. Cooper, author of several circus books and affiliated with the Sells-Floto Circus, went on to write a 1927 article about Cody and the early days of the Wild West, presumably drawing upon his previous discussions with Mrs. Cody and other sources. In 1926, Sells-Floto, then owned by the American Circus Corporation, reactivated the Buffalo Bill name and used it with its Wild West aftershow.

77. See John E. Clark, Jr., *Railroads in the Civil War*, (2001).

78. Louisa Cody *Memoir*, pages 283-288.

79. Courtney Ryley Cooper, "The Story of William Frederick Cody," *The Elks Magazine*, July 1927, page 33; Walsh, page 229; Shirley, page 100.

80. Newspaper ad, Pfening Archives; Yost, page 129, footnote 20. For Cooke's statement see *Billboard*, October 2, 1915, page 4.

81. *Ohio State Journal* (Columbus), May 16, 17 and 31, 1884, courtesy John F. Polacsek; Sarah J. Blackstone, *Buckskins, Bullets and Business; A History of Buffalo Bill*, (1986), page 37.

82. *New York Dramatic Mirror*, June 19, 1886, cited in Deahl, page 51. This was likely the source used in Walsh, page 257, and the derivative Walter Havighurst, *Annie Oakley of the Wild West*, (1954), p. 70. Sell and Weybright, page 148. Deahl, pages 75-76.

83. *Oxford English Dictionary*, (1961), Vol. IV, page 164; J. J. Jennings, *Theatrical and Circus Life*, (1886), page 281; Josephine DeMott Robinson, *The Circus Lady*, (1926), page 43. Dexter Fellows, page 119, also used the terms "gillpins" and "gills," as well as "jays" and "saps" to describe locals. Bert Chipman in *Hey Rube* (1933, p. 194) define "gilly" as "A show traveling by rented wagons, trucks or [railroad] cars. Anything rented."

84. *Billboard*, August 1, 1936, page 28; August 15, 1936, page 27; August 29, 1936, page 42; September 5, 1936, page 32. Sig Sautelle's *Tent City News*, May 11, 1904, John F. Polacsek collection.

85. Don H. Berkebile, *Carriage Terminology: An Historical Dictionary*, (1978), page 154.

86. Russell, pages 371-372,

citing Courtney Ryley Cooper, *Annie Oakley, Woman at Arms*, (1927), pages 325-326. Oakley was not with the Buffalo Bill's Wild West during the 1903-1906 European tour, precluding her observations from being in that time frame.

87. McCaddon memoir, page 703.

88. See Dahlinger, Part II.

89. Kasson, page 144.

90. James Noble, *Around the Coast with Buffalo Bill*, (1999), page 61.

91. Noble, page 61 Richard Alexis Georgian found a report of 45 cars in a newspaper article dated May 29, 1891 at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. The 1903-1904 Wild West train, which utilized 52 of the Barnum & Bailey cars that had been constructed in England for 1898, along with the 1896 Barney & Smith-built advertising car and wagons sent over from America, is heavily documented in British resources. See Noble, pages 62-70.

92. See the author's *Show Trains of the 20th Century*, (2000), pages 7-13, for images of the 1898-1902 Buffalo Bill train. One of the stock cars depicted therein can be seen in another photograph of the Forepaugh train.

93. See *Cosmopolitan*, June 1900, pages 120 and 125. Unfortunately, the originals of these and many other circus photographs do not survive in the Byron collection at the Museum of the City of New York.

94. See McCaddon memoir, page 709; Walsh, pages 309-310, lays blame for the failure on Cody, a perspective perhaps provided by his collaborator, Salisbury's son, Milton. Kasson, page 144. Further information on Black America is in Russell, page 379 and Robert C. Toll, *Blacking Up*, (1974), pages 262-263.

95. Walsh, page 310, repeated by Russell, page 379, and Yost, page 263. See Dahlinger, Part IV, and Ringling Bros. Composite Route Book 1882-1914, page 83, for relevant circus train data. The author analyzed the loading order of the 1908 Barnum & Bailey circus, filed in the Sverre O. Braathen collection at Illinois State University-Bloomington. It was supplemented by a roster and animal analysis, which yielded a 35% figure for

Buffalo Bill's flat cars being unloaded. Denver Public Library, Western History Collection NS-703.

the menagerie and side show components.

96. Yost, page 263; McCaddon memoir, page 704.

97. *Wausau (WI) Daily Record*, September 5, 1896; Fellows, pages 351-352.

98. Howard C. Tibbals collection. The date is established by the years when the Wild West had three advance cars; there was but one, or perhaps two, in 1895 and two in 1899.

99. Conover, *Bailey*, pages 14-15.

100. Train consists are in the 1899 and 1900 Buffalo Bill route books. Also see *Clipper*, June 8, 1901, page 320 and *Bandwagon*, August 15, 1945.

101. *Detroit News Tribune*, October 30, 1901, courtesy John F. Polacsek. This wreck appears in some tertiary accounts as 1902, which is incorrect.

102. 1902 route book; Superior (WI) *Evening Telegram*, May 28, 1902; *Billboard*, August 9, 1902.

103. Superior (WI.) *Evening Telegram*, May 28, 1902.

104. Yost, pages 292 (note 3) and 470 (note 7 to Chapter 25). The accounts confused the existence of several different cars, as did Havighurst's earlier Oakley book (page 191).

105. The first documented Barnum & London private car was James L. Hutchinson's number 50 of 1886-1887. The first photographically identified private car, Bailey's number 50 of 1888, was a former Pennsylvania Railroad vehicle. It was replaced for 1892 by a new vehicle from the Wason Car Company of Springfield, MA. The 1888-1891 car might have been a candidate for an 1891 sale; however, photographs show that it or an exact duplicate later served as an advance car in 1895. It may have been the private car numbered 50 offered for sale in a surplus auction on December 11, 1894.

106. The fire losses are in *Clipper*, January 27, 1900, page 1002.

107. Ralph L. Barger, *A Century of Pullman Cars*, Vol. II, *The Palace Cars*, (1990), pages 152-153 includes an interior view.

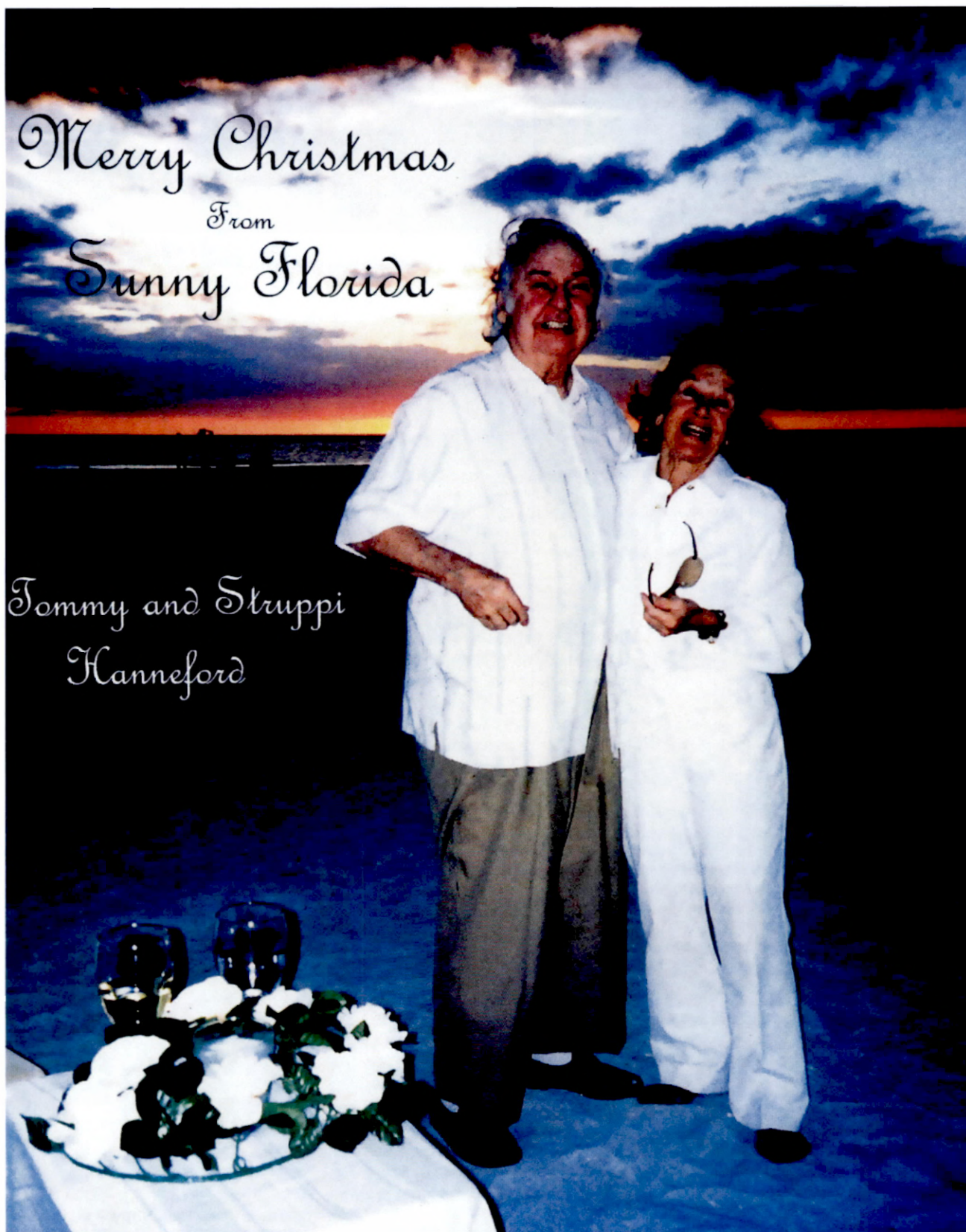
108. Yost, page 292 and note 3, page 472.

109. Wilson with Martin, page 209.

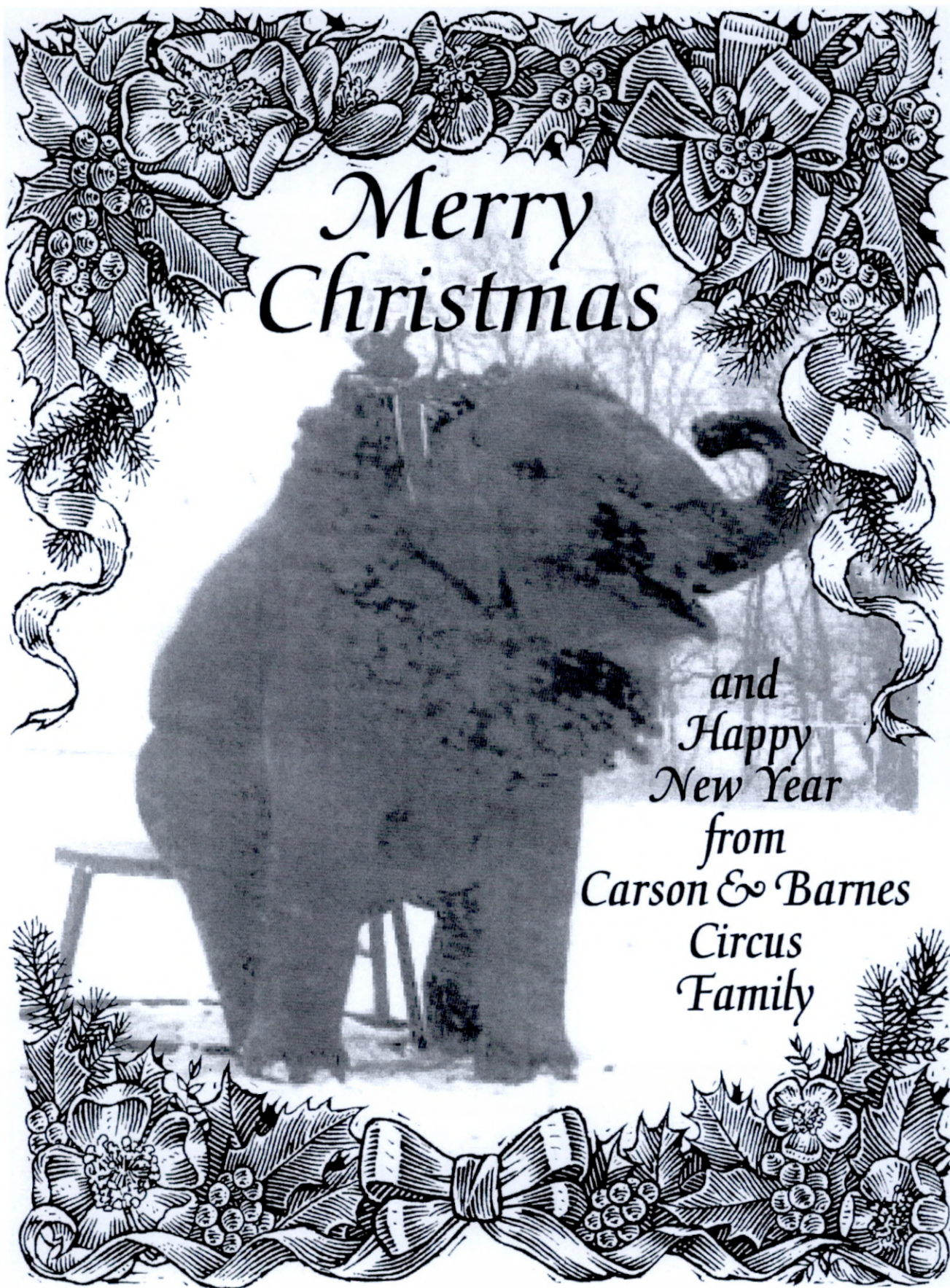
110. Barger, pages 155-157, contains images and a floor plan for the car. He misread the 1911 wreck account in Yost, page 370. Russell has a spurious 1904 Buffalo Bill wreck in *The Wild West*, page 95. It actually happened to a system railroad train conveying Indians recruited to go to Europe to join the show.

111. *Railway Age*, January 2, 1903, page 7, and January 1, 1904, page 10; Scott D. Trostel, *The Barney & Smith Car Company*, (1993), page 210.





THOMAS ROBERT HANNEFORD 1927-2005



The Not-So-Great TRANS-ATLANTIC Circus and Menagerie

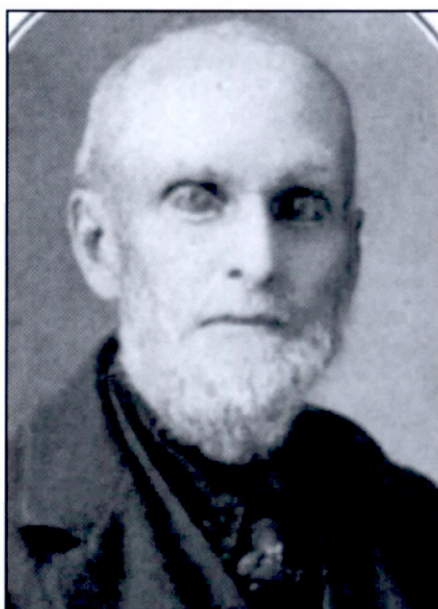
By William L. Slout

This paper was presented at the 2005 Circus Historical Society convention.

Pardon A. Older (1826-1908) was a wagon show manager who traveled chiefly in the Midwest. He is reputed to have traded a sawmill at Janesville, Wisconsin, worth \$5,000, for a third interest in the E. F. and J. Mabie circus in 1849. The show had about 70 horses, 8 wagons, an 85-foot round-top, and a 30-foot dressing tent. Older's Great U. S. Circus followed this in 1852. Others under his name included Orton & Older's, with Miles Orton in the years 1858-60, and Older's Museum, Circus and Menagerie, 1870-73.¹

Agent John Dingess, who was with Older's 1873 organization, described

Pardon A. Older. Pfening Archives.



him as "one of the most gentlemanly of managers," recalling that he was "extremely popular in every section of the country, especially throughout the West," and in appearance being easily taken for a person of the clergy.²

At the end of P. T. Barnum's 1872 season, a smaller show was formed in Detroit and sent South under the management of P. A. Older, leased to use Barnum's name and partially financed by him. There was a suggestion that Coup was opposed to the splitting up of the animals and equipment, but Barnum was interested in promoting his name in the South. He could not do it with his own large show because, with his rail car wheels built for the northern "standard gauge" tracks (4 feet 8 1/2 inches in width), it would be too expensive, time consuming and cumbersome for them to be changed to accommodate the "southern gauge" (5 feet in width), still in use throughout much of the South. The deal appeared to be a good one for both parties; the Barnum name was expected to draw large crowds and the surplus animals loaned to Older would be cared for throughout the winter months.³

The tour opened in Louisville, Kentucky, on November 4, 1872, and then followed a route through Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia and Louisiana, ending up with financial trouble in New Orleans. An eight-day stand there closed the operation, which was said to have lost Older his life's savings of \$60,000.

Old John Robinson "owned the South." Circuses under his name had covered the territory for

years. In opposition to Older, his press department flooded the route in advance with bills and couriers using Barnum's literature, but attaching it to the Robinson show title. When the Barnum and Older advertising was posted, the Southerners rejected it with "that Yankee clock peddler has copied Uncle John's bills word for word." The magical name of "P. T. Barnum" had not appealed to Southern audiences.

In December, Barnum went to New Orleans to reclaim the property. In his autobiography, he makes no disclosure of the Older show's failure, but simply states that he was in New Orleans visiting his Southern show. At this time, some of the animals

John A. Dingess (1849-1882) Older's agent. Pfening Archives.



were sent back north. Richard E. Conover wrote that Coup was also there at the time.

This was confirmed by an item in the New York *Clipper* both Barnum and Coup went to New Orleans "to look after the interests of Barnum's Southern Museum, Circus and Menagerie." C. G. Sturtevant, quite the contrary, alleged that Coup refused to go. We believe Conover's entry to be correct.

On January 23, Older and J. M. Chandler contracted to buy the show property from Barnum & Co. that had been stored at Algiers, Louisiana, following the termination of Older's lease in December. Chandler had been Older's general agent for the doomed winter tour. Because of the planned enlargement of the Barnum show, this was probably redundant equipment. So here, P. T. made another of his close deals. The purchase price was \$50,000 plus a "rent" of 7% per annum. An advance of \$5,000 was given the proprietors to get started. Older could draw up to \$6,000 in salary, Chandler up to \$2,000, and they were allowed to keep \$2,000 on hand for emergencies. All profits were to be returned daily to the Barnum company in New York. Older and Chandler were required to guarantee funds necessary to provide winter storage, replacing of animals, and re-fitting of the show in the event the debt was not paid in full by the end of the season. Barnum & Co. retained the privilege of placing a man on the show if so desired at the expense of Older & Chandler. The name of P. T. Barnum was not to be used in any way (Louis E. Cooke claimed that it was). Barnum & Co. retained the right of repossessing the rhinoceros for \$7,000 if the one they had in New York died before the start of the season. The contract was signed by S. H. Hurd, treasurer, P. T. Barnum & Co., and by P. A. Older and J. M. Chandler.⁴

The deal gave Older re-birth in circus management under the title of Older & Chandler's Trans-Atlantic Circus and Menagerie. The tour took the show from winter quarters at Algiers into Mississippi and, from there, north into Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, back down to Kansas and,

ultimately, Texas.

Although advertisements proclaimed greatness--the largest and best show on earth, a menagerie of 500 living wild animals, a monster black rhinoceros weighing two tons, a white elephant, an aquarium of sea monsters, sea lions, seals and two monster crocodiles twenty feet long from the river Nile, 100 star performers, seven colossal tents on five acres of ground, a magnificent procession two miles long, and the tent brilliantly lighted by 5,000 gas jets--it was a comparatively small show with a weak company. There was a promise of free daily balloon ascensions made by Sig. Figaro, "the great Spanish balloonist" in his "monster balloon Madrid," and performances in double rings, all for the standard 50 and 25 cents.

We see, from the advertisements, at least, that Barnum's automatons "The Sleeping Beauty," "Bell Ringers" and "The Dying Zouave" were exhibited, as well as Fiji Cannibals of some description. The featured performers were Mlle. Watson, equestrienne; W. H. Taylor, hurdle rider; the Victorelle Family (Marie, Antoinette, Oscar and Little Victor); and a man named

A Trans-Atlantic newspaper for the Chetopa, Kansas date. Kansas State Historical Society.

Chapman (Perhaps with trained horses).

The show tangled early in the tour at Evansville, Indiana, with the Great Eastern, which was scheduled to visit there on April 12. The Trans-Atlantic preceded it by appearing on the 4th, out-advertising it in the press and equaling it in exaggerated claims of size and excellence. The Great Eastern was scheduled to appear at Belleville, Illinois, on April 14, with the Trans-Atlantic arriving ahead on the 9th. There was no comment from the local papers, so we are at a loss to judge the success of either; but we know from the newspaper advertisements they both made bold promises that neither were equipped to carry out.

The Topeka *Daily Commonwealth* of May 2 reported, "Topeka was yesterday bowed down under a disappointment as bitter and an affliction as heavy as the hog cholera or the horse disease. A circus came to town and it rained like a second deluge, making a very tame and wet affair, and washing the paint off the automatons, causing them to look like miniature mummies without their Sunday clothes on. The procession passed through the principal streets at the usual hour, the ponies and goats sinking almost out of sight in the mud, which, to use a sweet

<p>AUGUST 9th.</p> <p>Not until</p> <p>AUGUST 9TH</p> <p>Will the</p> <p>Big Show!</p> <p>Be at</p> <p>Chetopa.</p> <p>AUGUST 9th.</p> <p>Remember will Exhibit at Chetopa, August 9th.</p>	<p>Great Trans-Atlantic Exposition</p>  <p>Museum, Circus, Menagerie, Aviary, Aquarium and Grand European Hippodrome!</p> <p>The LARGEST and BEST SHOW ON EARTH.</p>  <p>100 STAR PERFORMERS</p> <p>Appear in the Circus, performing in a Double ring.</p> <p>SEVEN COLOSSAL TENTS COVER FIVE ACRES OF GROUND.</p> <p>In the evening the Performers are brilliantly illuminated by 5,000 gas jets.</p> <p>Magnificent Procession two Miles long, with three full bands and band stands and a Grand Military Band.</p> <p>Grand Free Balloon</p> <p>Ascensions each day.</p> <p>Remember the Date, CHETOPA, FRIDAY, JULY 10TH.</p> <p>DOORS OPEN AT 1 and 7 P. M.</p> <p>Admission, 50 Cts. Children, 25 Cts.</p> <p>J. M. CHANDLER, Gen. Agent.</p> <p>Be Sure and Wait FOR THE BIG SHOW</p>	<p>AUGUST 9th.</p> <p>Not until</p> <p>AUGUST 9TH</p> <p>Will the</p> <p>Big Show!</p> <p>Be at</p> <p>Chetopa.</p> <p>AUGUST 9th.</p> <p>Remember will Exhibit at Chetopa, August 9th.</p>
--	--	--

comparison, was of the consistency of good sorghum molasses. In the afternoon, a performance was given to a fair crowd, composed mostly of Kaws [local Indians] and country folks, the stormy weather preventing the residents of the city from attending. In the evening, the attendance was what might be called good. It was different in that respect from the show.⁵

At Chetopa, Kansas, the show butted heads with George W. DeHaven's Great Chicago, starring James Robinson. The Trans-Atlantic was booked for July 18; the Great Chicago for August 9. The Southern Kansas Advance was not compassionate in its observance. "The 'Great Atlantic-Exposition' has come and gone. Two of Chetopa's lots, not remarkable for their dimensions, only were required for their 'seven colossal tents.' Their gas had all evaporated; consequently, their balloon would not go up. The 'magnificent procession,' two miles long was condensed to about forty rods, with the wagons two or three rods apart. In the 'museum of 100,000 rare curiosities,' the chief curiosity was that ancient and dishonorable insect known as humbug. The '500 living animals' had nearly all died, and but few aside from a cage of very common monkeys were left. The monster black rhinoceros had escaped in Texas, and the sea monsters, sea lions, seals, crocodiles, slid out while they were being watered in the Gulf of Mexico. The greater part of the 100 star performers had deserted the outfit, and are staking out claims down in the Indian Territory. There was a town full of people to attend this tail end of a circus and menagerie, and we are sorry they did not get their money's worth after coming so far through the dust and dirt."⁶

Alas! After the Texas tour, the unfortunate circus folded in Shreveport, Louisiana. John Dingess, who was with the show at this time, recorded that the demise of the Great Trans-Atlantic occurred as follows: "After the tour of the state of Texas, and toward the end of the traveling season, the establishment arrived at Shreveport, Louisiana, where the performances of the com-

pany came to an abrupt termination by the appearance of yellow fever in its worst form. Everybody appeared panic stricken, and began to hasten away with all possible speed; many, however, who were unable to get away, fell victims to the dread disease. All the performers and musicians, together with the writer and several other attaches, embarked at midnight on a steam packet bound for St. Louis, Missouri, which was the last steamer to leave that port for many weeks. Many of the passengers seemed ill at ease until late in the afternoon of the following day, when the mouth of Red River was reached and were steaming up the current of the noble Mississippi, when perfect and real rejoicing began among all hands. The band played lively airs and selections from many of the most popular standard operas, and the inhabitants were regaled with choice music at almost every landing during the entire journey. The trip to St. Louis required some eight or nine days, when the people separated and departed in different directions to their respective homes. This was Mr. Older's last experience in show business."⁷

We thank Tom Parkinson and his search through the pages of the 1873 Shreveport *Times* for a more detailed reportage of the events.⁸



The circus arrived at Shreveport on August 15 for a two-day stand, most likely on the circus lot at the corner of Milam and Edwards Streets. Rainy weather caused the loss of the matinee. The *Times* complimented John Barry's riding, along with first-class riding and tumbling in general. It also indicated there would be an additional performance on the 17th.

"As the circus lays over until tomorrow, it will give a show tonight at the usual hour."

On the 20th, the ax fell. "COMES TO GRIEF. The Trans-Atlantic Exposition has been attached at the suit of several parties who belonged to the establishment. The employees have been thrown temporarily out of employment and out of means at the

same time. To assist these men a complimentary benefit was given them last night in which all the artists of the exposition assisted."

On August 23, the *Times* reported: "The managers of the Trans-Atlantic Exposition have, so far as we can learn, honestly discharged all the obligations incurred here, which was done with the proceeds of the sale of their splendid horses, the finest, taken all together, we have seen in a circus. The animals have been attached and are now in the hands, metaphorically speaking, of Sheriff Flournoy, though this is done, if we are not misinformed, by some of the attaches of the concern. Indeed, a family disagreement seems to have been the origin on the financial troubles of the exposition. In case of the sale of the animals, we propose buying the elephant, rhinoceros, lions and tigers with which to guard our sanctum. They will do excellent service in lieu of the 'fighting editor.'"

The circus people were exerting all efforts to raise traveling money. An ad on the 24th announced that the artists of the Trans-Atlantic Exposition would give a performance at Linman's Beer Garden that day, the program to include ring horses and the band, all for 50 cents.

The former Great Chicago, which had been bothersome in Kansas, arrived on the 30th now billed as the Great James Robinson's Circus, Great Show of the South and American Exposition of Wonders, "the Greatest Show on Earth," featuring James Robinson, Frank Robbins, Mons. Duprat and sons Clarence and Eugene, all riders; Leopold and Geraldine, acrobats; Stickney and King, clowns; the Royal Japanese troupe, and Prof. Judson's "flying ship of the air."

This same day the *Times* criticized the city administration for unsanitary conditions, causing a great deal of sickness. For example, city officials had not removed the carcasses of a hundred cattle, drowned when a steamer sank nearby. "If there is a city of the population of this in a civilized country that is filthier and that furnishes at every corner a greater variety of bad smells, we should like to hear of it."

By September 2, the dead cattle

had been removed and the city had organized the Howard Association to fight illness. "Reports are exaggerated," the *Times* stated on September 3. "There is some yellow fever and there have been a number of deaths. But there is no epidemic." However, the ensuing death lists revealed the growing number of fever fatalities; and by September 14, it totaled 146. "Death is certainly making a fearful havoc with our citizens," the paper admitted.

An article, **THE CIRCUS AND THE PESTILENCE**, was placed in the *Times* on the 13th of September. "The opinion has been growing in the community that the pestilence with which this city is afflicted was brought here from the vicinity of Mexico by the Trans-Atlantic circus, which broke up after its arrival among us, and the property of which is still camped in the heart of the city. The disease, which is so rapid in its course and fatal in its results, is pronounced by some to be a malignant type of yellow fever peculiar to Vera Cruz and that portion of Mexico. It is alleged that a number of the attaches of the Trans-Atlantic Exposition belonged to a circus that has recently been in that region; it is regarded as remarkable that a circus with the splendid paraphernalia and valuable properties of this one and belonging to so influential a capitalist as P. T. Barnum, should have broken up here for the want of money; it is affirmed that men connected with it abandoned it as an **INFECTED** show and not from pecuniary consideration, and it is stated with confidence that while the circus was exhibiting to our people there was a case of the present fever in the side shows. Now these are serious facts and although it is too late to remedy the evil, still we think the properties of this circus should be removed from our midst. We believe that all the trunks, clothes and other articles capable of holding infectious poison should be burned up, no matter what their value, and that the animals and tents should be removed out of the city and there kept until disposed of. The animals should not be burned for they are harmless, except that they are in a city nuisances. We counsel the city authorities to consult the physicians of the city, and if the fac-

ulty approve these views, to act upon them **FEARLESSLY** and **WITHOUT DELAY**." Forthwith animals were removed to the outskirts, the very least, relieving the community of the roaring and howling.

Meanwhile, Older & Chandler et. al, presumably that included the Barnum organization, were being sued by former employees Frank Stevens, William Porter, Frederick Watson, R. W. Fryer, John Barry, J. L. Brooks, John Dingess and Charles Lewis. Everything belonging to the show was auctioned on September 20th and again on October 4th. The 10th Judicial District Court for the Parish of Caddo was responsible for the public auction at the courthouse door in the city of Shreveport. The property included in the sale was listed as follows: 1 band wagon, 7

property wagons containing circus property, 1 wagon and cage containing monkeys and 1 kangaroo, 1 wagon and cage containing 1 deer and 1 peafowl, 1 wagon and cage containing 2 lions, 1 wagon and cage containing 2 leopards and 1 hyena, 1 wagon and cage containing 1 rhinoceros, 1 wagon and cage containing 1 pelican and 1 black wolf, 1 wagon and cage containing birds and monkeys, 7 museum wagons and contents, 2 Goats, 1 Baby Elephant. James Cumpston purchased the rhinoceros for \$5,600, the baby elephant at \$3,500, the leopard and hyena for \$370, the lion and lioness for \$555 and a cage of monkeys and birds for \$202. Charles Frost bought the band and entree horses.

Another Trans-Atlantic newspaper ad. Author's collection.

At La Crosse, TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 1873



Great Trans-Atlantic Exposition!

Museum, Circus, Menagerie, Aviary, Aquarium
AND GRAND ROMAN HIPPODROME.

THE LARGEST AND BEST SHOW ON EARTH.

A Museum Containing 100,000 Rare Curiosities.
MENAGERIE OF 500 LIVING WILD ANIMALS

AMONG THEM A
MONSTER BLACK RHINOCEROS WEIGHING TWO TONS.
AQUARIUM OF SEA MONSTERS, SEA LIONS, SEALS, &c.

One Hundred Star Performers
Appear in the Circus, performing in a Double Ring. Seven Colossal Tents, Cover Five Acres of Ground. In the evening the Pavilions are brilliantly illuminated by Five Thousand Gas Jets.

GRAND BALL CON ASCENSION EACH DAY.
Remember the Date, **June 17**. Doors Open at 1 and 7 P. M. Admission, 50 cts. Children, 25 cts. June 17 only 4-8 m-w-friw J. M. CHANDLER, General Agent.

Six thousand people had fled the city. Deaths totaled 226. All stores were closed. Sympathizers throughout the country sent donations, including P. T. Barnum, apparently no longer connected to Older & Chandler, who anted up \$100. But the fever continued to rage.

On September 26, the newspaper abandoned the claim that the circus was to blame for the epidemic and admitted that the show had been made a scapegoat to protect Shreveport's reputation and its chances for expansion. The circus was an easy target, being foreign to the city; although no fingers were pointed in the direction of the James Robinson organization. In fairness, however, it must be mentioned that other possibilities were voiced--the drowned cattle, decayed vegetable matter from the river that polluted the air; not to mention "electrical phenomenon beyond the comprehension of man."

Fever deaths reached 527 when the epidemic began to fall off, but final approval for the return of refugees was not given until November 5. It was determined by the committee of doctors that the epidemic had not been caused by the cir-

cus because it had come to town en route from Dallas and Houston, touching no infected point, leaving no trail of disease, with no member of its troupe sick on arrival. The conclusion was that the seeds of the epidemic had been brought from New Orleans on riverboats.

On December 18, the *Times* reported a show would be given under a pavilion at the usual circus lot at Milam and Edwards Streets, the apparent remnants of Older & Chambers after its sale. Steven's Amphitheatre, as it was called, opened on the October 23, with performances continuing daily through the holidays, under the management of Frank Stevens, the former treasurer for Older. Included in the programs were John Barry in his bareback act and Master Leon on the flying trapeze. A week later, it was announced that the show would give a free performance in appreciation to the people of Shreveport, it being the last one in the city for the present.

The finality of the Trans-Atlantic's demise was epitomized by the epitaphs appearing in New York *Clipper* trade cards, advertising the sale of the Older & Chandler property by

John Caldwell of Shreveport and the animals by James Cumpston.

In conclusion, the Trans-Atlantic was on the rocks before the yellow fever outbreak, not caused by it. Poor Older was ruined again. And, finally, agent John Dingess was in error. This was not Pardon Older's last stand; he continued in show business for another decade before retiring to his farm near Onoka, Minnesota.

NOTES

1. William L. Slout, *Olympians of the Sawdust Circle*, p. 227.
2. John Dingess unpublished manuscript. Hertzberg Collection.
3. William L. Slout, *A Royal Coupling*, p. 53.
4. Richard E. Conover notes, obtained by photostatic copy in the possession of Tom Parkinson.
5. Orin C. King, "Only Big Show Coming," *Bandwagon*, September-October, 1987, p. 22.
6. *Ibid.*, pp.22-23.
7. Dingess manuscript, pp. 259-260.
8. Tom Parkinson, "Folding of Older & Chandler Show at Shreveport in 1873" *The White Tops*, July 8, 1949, pp. 3, 4.



SEASON'S GREETINGS

*Merry Christmas
And
A
Happy New Year*

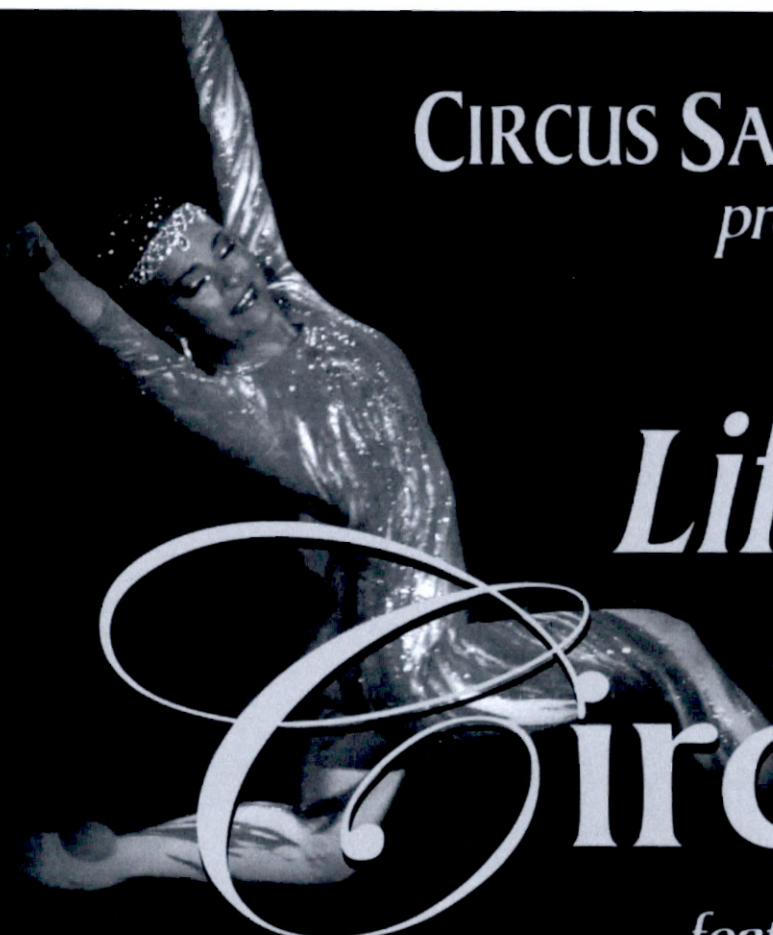


International Circus Hall of Fame

3076 East Circus Lane, P.O. Box 700, Peru, IN 46970

Phone: (765) 472-7553, 1-800-771-0241

CIRCUS SARASOTA
presents



Life
is a
Circus

featuring...
**The Flying
Wallendas**

Season 2006
February 3 - 26
Under the Big Top
Tuttle South of Fruitville
(941) 355-9805 for Tickets



CIRCUS SARASOTA

A *sign* *Live*
COMCAST *Digital* *Triforce*

DELIGHT FOR SHOGUN, GIFT FROM NEHRU: History of Traveling Menageries of Japan

By Ken Kawata

This paper was presented at the 2005 Circus Historical Society convention.

Throughout the centuries, traveling menageries of various sizes toured across this nation of the arc-shaped archipelago off eastern Asia. This account represents a tribute to the beasts and men who entertained the public during their brief lives, only to perish in the dust bin of history, largely forgotten. Your writer will review the highlights of the menageries that have dotted the history of animal exhibitry in Japan. In earlier years there were numerous traveling exhibits consisting of one animal, or two of the same species. Although

A World Animal Expo circus poster from the mid-1950s. All illustrations are from the author.

these single specimen or species exhibits would make a fascinating subject, a traveling menagerie in this account is defined as an exhibit with a multiple species collection.

However, two exceptions have to be made because of the immense cultural impact they cast upon the society. The first one, an Asian elephant, was not an animal for public exhibit, yet his contributions to folk culture were remarkable. He was the very first elephant for the innumerable people who were lost in wonder at the sight of him during his long journey across Japan.

Pioneering Crowd Pleasers

During the Edo or Tokugawa Era (1603-1867) the emperor resided in Kyoto without political power, while the government was in the hands of the feudal general shogun in Edo,

later named Tokyo.

Rulers of centralized feudalism came to view foreign influences as a threat to the stability of their country, and beginning in 1638 they closed the door to the outside world. For more than two centuries this isolation sealed Japan as completely as possible from foreign contacts. Of all Europeans, only the Dutch were allowed to trade through Nagasaki on Kyushu Island in southern Japan. Isolation, ironically, caused the people to draw unusually sharp attention to anything from abroad. Their extraordinarily keen

curiosity and voracious appetite for knowledge about the outside world continue today.

By order of the shogun, on 7 June 1728 two elephants arrived at the port of Nagasaki, delivered by a Chinese trader's boat.¹ The male was said to be seven years old and the female, five years old. She died on 11 September while they were in temporary housing in Nagasaki. Their arrival marked the fifth shipment of elephants to Japan, yet the remaining male became the most well known during centralized feudalism.

After losing his mate, he left Nagasaki for Edo on 13 March of the following year, guarded by a 17-member security force. The party entered

Another World Animal Expo poster from the mid-1950s.





Yano menagerie's lion, claimed to be from the King of Denmark, arrived in Kobe in 1907 and stayed with Yano for 12 years. A postcard from Iwao Akune collection.

Osaka on 16 April, and arrived at Kyoto on 26 April, surrounded by hordes of people. Residents were ordered to keep dogs and cats off the street, and to keep horses and cows quiet so as not to spook the shogun's elephant. They were also ordered to take extra caution for fire prevention.

While in Kyoto he was bestowed a title of nobility and on 28 April, the emperor and the monk-emperor (a retired emperor in holy orders) granted him an audience at the imperial palace. It is said the elephant knelt down and took a bow. The titled elephant and his entourage left Kyoto for Edo on the following day, continuing their eastward journey at a pace of 20-24 kilometers (12-15 miles) a day. On their route bridges were repaired, and roads were improved. On 25 May the party entered Edo, and two days later, he was taken to the Edo Castle to have the honor of being viewed by the shogun himself.

As poems were written (including those by the emperor and monk-emperor) and books were published about him, the elephant took the society by storm. Elephant designs became quite fashionable. Playwrights did not miss this opportunity; soon a new kabuki play about an elephant, a nobleman and a samurai (warrior) made a debut (this play made a revival in October 1933 in Tokyo).

The shogun took a liking to this elephant. While the elephant was

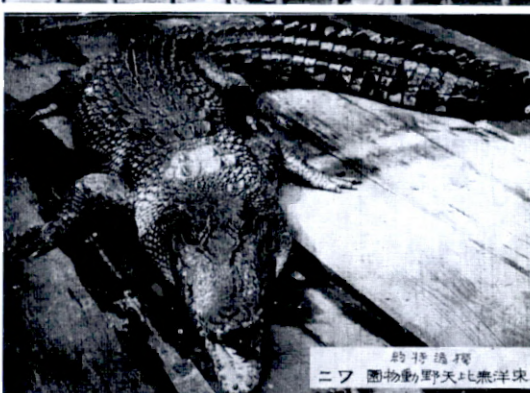
kept in the palace for 13 years, he was taken to the Edo Castle repeatedly.

However, maintaining an elephant is a costly undertaking, then and now. Transferring an elephant to the Castle, as well as feeding him, became a burden, and a decision

was made to look for a taker. He was released to a farmer, whose inadequate care led to an unfortunate death of the elephant at the age of 21. (As for public exhibits, a female Asian elephant arrived in 1862 and was on exhibit in Edo in the following spring; in the closing days of the centralized feudalism this became the most notable commercial success for an exotic animal exhibition.)

A century later another page was added to history. This time it was a pair of dromedary camels, brought in by the Dutch arriving at Nagasaki on 1 July 1821. They were from Persia (now Iran); the male was said to be five years of age, and the female, four. After changing ownership several times the pair fell in the hand of a showman, thus beginning the course to become popular cultural icons. Their trail began on Kyushu Island leading to Osaka and Kyoto, and eventually to Edo on 6 August of 1824 where huge crowds greeted them. The magnitude of their popularity and the wild enthusiasm generated is utterly unthinkable today.

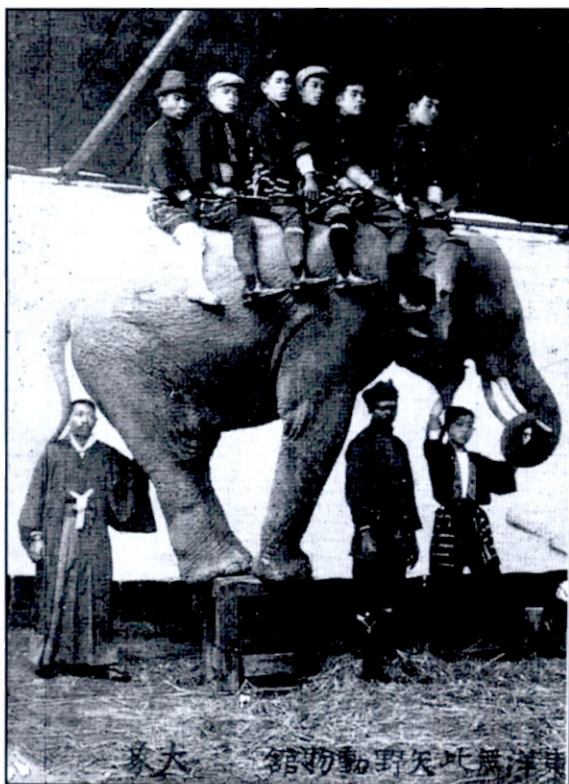
Songwriters churned out ballads, life-sized replicas and children's toys were manufactured, color prints and documents were published. Even a camel-brand charcoal appeared on the market. Because the pair was said to be "affectionate" with each other, human couples in public were often teased as being camels. They were on exhibit in Edo beginning on 9 August. Despite steep admission



Postcards of Yano menagerie, "unequaled in the Orient," from Iwao Akune collection. A giant Siberian tiger, a crocodile and a python with monitor lizards.

fees the house was filled to capacity, on some days exceeding 5,000 viewers. The exhibit was held over time after time, and the camels ended up in Edo for half a year. In total, they were on the road for more than 10 years, making appearances in more than 30 locations, turning the traveling exhibit into a lucrative endeavor.²

As a footnote on folk culture, exotic animals were believed to bring about divine favor, a response to prayers and a charm against evil. For instance, a cassowary arrived in Nagasaki in 1789 and was later



Iwata Yano in traditional garb (far left) with an Indian mahout and Anna the Asian elephant. Postcard from Iwao Akune collection.

placed on exhibit in Osaka and Edo.

It was thought viewing the large bird and touching its feathers would produce medicinal properties. The aforementioned female elephant, on public exhibit in 1863, was also supposed to have sacred power for protection from evil and brought good fortune. In the public's mind this big beast from overseas possessed such magical faculty. In some cases,

Anna the elephant. Yano menagerie postcard, July 1926. Iwano Akune collection.



viewing of such animals was said to be effective in curing said smallpox and measles in children. After the country opened its door to the West such a supernatural appeal was dropped from traveling exhibits, replaced with an emphasis on their educational value.³

The self-imposed isolation of Japan came to an end when Commodore Matthew Perry of the United States Navy arrived in 1853 with the demand that Japan open its doors. Once the barrier crumbled, Japanese faced the technical and industrial superiority of the West. Cultural borrowing from abroad, initially from China and Korea, helped Japan enter the industrial age.

Soon, Japan rolled out the welcome mat for the sweeping tide of cultural imports from the West. The window to the outside world shifted from Nagasaki to the port of Yokohama, near Edo.

Starting in Yokohama, the Italian circus of Giuseppe Chiarini toured the country in 1886 and 1887. American and French circuses had made entry into Japan in earlier decades. However, Chiarini was the first to introduce performing exotic animals including lion, tiger and elephant acts. Chiarini was a major sensation. For its Tokyo run 1 September through 30 October 1886, Chiarini erected four tents in a lot about 6,600 square meters or 1.6 acres in size. Immediately behind the

entrance was a menagerie featuring an ostrich, the first in Japan⁴, lion, tiger, elephant, monkey, zebu and giant snake.⁵

At this time, Japan's first zoo in Ueno Park in Tokyo (opened in 1882) was in its infant stage with no large cats or elephant.⁶ While in Tokyo Chiarini's tiger gave birth to three cubs, and two of them, a male and a female, were sent to Ueno Zoo on 4 February 1887 in exchange for two brown bears. They were the first tigers in a Japanese zoo, thus beginning the long relationship between circuses and zoos. Thanks to the first Japanese-born tigers, the zoo's attendance surpassed 240,000 that year. A 35.8% increase over the previous year, this was the highest figure since its opening.⁷

Through the floodgates waves of exotic animals began to arrive, enabling the birth of traveling menageries. A wider variety of animals was presented compared to earlier times, including not only large mammals, but smaller animals. A handbill of a traveling menagerie in Osaka in March 1891 carried illustrations of a tiger, leopard (both in cage wagons), camel, porcupine and parrot.⁸ Around the turn of the twentieth century, half a dozen large collections crisscrossed the country. At the top of the roster was one owned by a colorful character named Iwata Yano (born 1865). His operation has been ably chronicled by Iwao Akune.⁹

It All Began with a Wild Cat

During the Sino-Japanese War

A Malayan tapir. Yano menagerie postcard, July 1926. Iwano Akune collection.





In the mid-1910s Yano strengthened the traveling menagerie with improved wild animal acts by trainer Toyo Yano (stage name; he was no relation to Iwato Yano). Iwao Akune collection.

(1894-1895) Yano was stationed in Korea. He brought home a wild cat (the exact species is not clear) and began a sideshow with just one animal. Up front stood a barker in military uniform, none other than Yano himself. Customers kept piling in, and he added locally collected snakes colored with gold dust. A leopard was added, followed by a tiger, and his business outgrew the sideshow. With a plan for a traveling menagerie Yano purchased two male lions, said to be from Hagenbeck, from a Japanese animal dealer in Kobe. One of them was young with no mane, so they were advertised as a male and a female.

The lions made their debut in Hiroshima in 1907. With lions Yano hit the jackpot; he stuffed the day's income in wooden coal crates, took them to the inn at night, and his wife kept

counting money until dawn. In addition to the lions, a total of 30 animals was on exhibit including a kangaroo, baboon, tiger, wolf, porcupine, peafowl, crane, parrot and giant snake. With education as a catchword, the menagerie was open from nine a.m. to eleven p.m. for 10 days. It was held over for 10 more days because Yano could not accommodate the ever-increasing crowds, particularly school groups.

With rising popularity Yano took bolder public relations tactics, giving the press padded and often-question-

Prime Minister Nehru of India stated that his gift, an elephant named Indira after his daughter, was the ambassador of world peace. His message to Japanese children, was dated 1 September 1949.

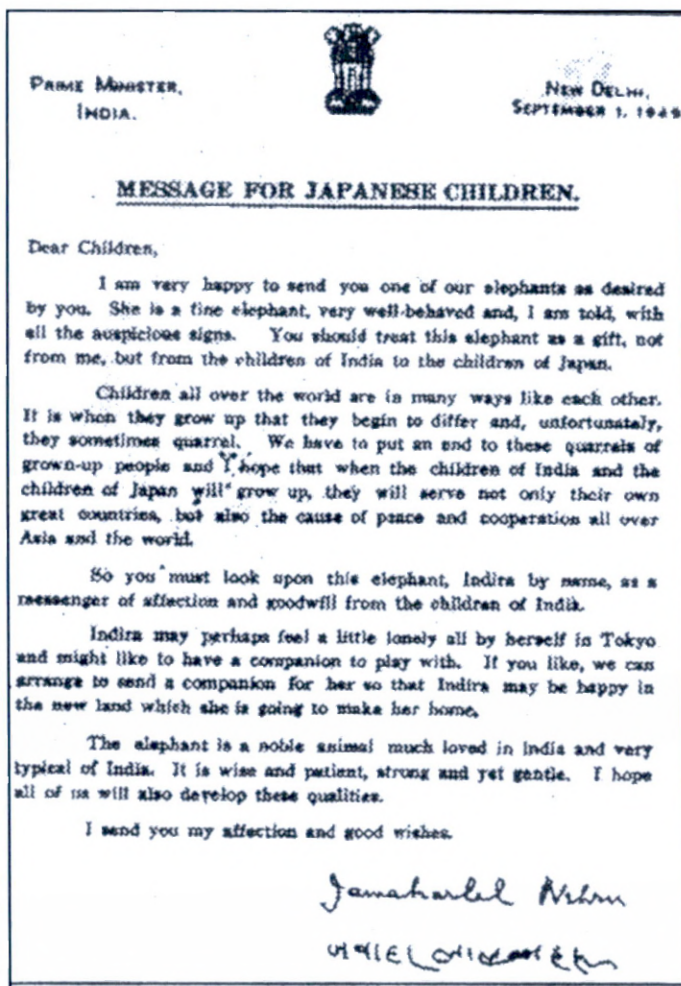


Another photo of Toyo Yano. Iwao Akune collection.

able information. News spread that his big lion was captured on Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa as a cub. He was purchased by the Hamburg Animal Company (meaning Hagenbeck) and offered to the emperor of Denmark, who later disposed of him. It was an excellent gimmick. Another story claimed that the menagerie's lynx was the former pet of a defeated Russian general in the Russo-Japanese War.

If this man gave the impression of being a mountebank, it was by no means limited to him. The same tendency may be noted in the operators of privately owned menageries, from the aforementioned camel exhibitor all the way to those who ran the large operations in the 1950s.

Masses of people flocked to see Yano's menagerie everywhere it went. As the business kept growing another unit was created, traveling all across Japan from roughly 1909 to 1912. The famous Danish emperor's lion stayed with the second unit. In one town local police questioned the authenticity of the claim. But Yano prevailed. The police also accused the show of animal cruelty for feeding live rabbits to lions in front of school children, and successfully banned this practice. Each unit



had nearly an equal number of animals including the basic stock: lion, tiger, leopard, camel and exotic birds. It took two freight cars and over 30 people to transfer more than 40 kinds of animals. There were several other traveling menageries in the early 1910s, but none could compete with this two-unit operation.

Increasing demand for the crowd-drawing attractions resulted in more innovative steps.

A side show with a Mongolian dwarf woman was added. Elephant acts, albeit simple, became crowd pleasers. New displays such as tiger-and-man sumo wrestling developed into bona fide animal acts by the late 1910s, with a lion, a tiger and a black leopard all in single animal acts. Combining animal acts with aerial acts and acrobatics, a show department was created in 1916, becoming the forerunner of the Yano Circus. (According to Mr. Akune the birth of Yano Circus could also be established as 1907, the year the traveling menagerie began.)

The business was thriving in the summer of 1923, with daily proceeds reaching a whopping fifteen times more than operating costs such as wages and feed for animals. With disposable cash in his hands, Yano was preparing for a trip to Kobe for purchasing animals when he collapsed, caused by a cerebral hemorrhage. After his death in 1926, the once-prosperous operation began to decline. Without a strong leader it kept going downhill, and the traveling menagerie was dissolved in December of 1928.

After the native-born pioneer in animal exhibitry passed on, the public was fortunate enough to have a very special treat. The pioneer with international fame was coming to the Land of the Rising Sun from Germany.

With Hagenbeck's Noah's Ark aboard, the *S.S. Saarland* was put in at Yokohama on 22 March 1933. It was evident, from a newspaper arti-



Ueno Zoo, Tokyo sent a traveling menagerie to the Eastern and Northern parts of Japan in 1950, featuring Indria the elephant. Indria visited Zenkoji Temple with police escorts. in Nagana. Tokyo Zoological Park Society photo.

cle on the following day, that the awe-struck reporter's eyes opened wide at the sight: "Five elephants, 12 tigers, 10 lions, 12 bears including 10 polars, one rhinoceros, two giraffes, six camels, 32 horses, 18 ponies and more. Some were still on the deck, in freight cars bearing big letters, CARL HAGENBECK. On 25 March a Tokyo newspaper carried an ad, four-columns across, by Lorenz Hagenbeck. In this announcement, he stated in his formal style that the 182 animals and his 150-member staff were looking forward to seeing the Japanese people, and that with confidence the staff would make every effort to meet their expectations.¹⁰

And he kept his word. The Hagenbeck circus became a huge national sensation. In Nagoya it sold out advance-booking tickets for both circus and menagerie. "The very first day, the circus tent was completely surrounded by an enormous throng of people. At the menagerie box-office there was a four-deep queue. It stretched all round us, growing every minute." Hagenbeck continued, "We had a five weeks' run at Nagoya, with two performances daily, at two and five, both always sold out to the last seat. In addition,

on many days we counted no less than twenty-five thousand visitors to the menagerie."¹¹

The curtain rose on the modern circus era in Japan when the Chiarini Circus visited. Following Chiarini, Hagenbeck made an immense impact. For instance, Hagenbeck popularized the word "circus" (previously there was no unifying term). Uniformly adopting the new name, circuses

moved into a golden era.¹² Hagenbeck also strengthened the relationship between circuses and zoos. The firm began exporting animals to Japan earlier, but the major impact became noticeable after the dawn of the twentieth century. Particularly, Hagenbeck enriched the collections of Ueno Zoo in Tokyo and Kyoto Zoo.

Prior to the arrival of the circus, Lorenz Hagenbeck began trade negotiations with zoo officials in person. Soon, Ueno Zoo acquired a small menagerie including a giant anteater (first to Ueno) and a pair of giraffes. Four polar bears found a home at Osaka's Tennoji Zoo (they met a tragic death a decade later, as noted below). During the 1933 tour Hagenbeck brought in the first examples of various species in Japan; among them was a pair of South American tapirs. Kyoto Zoo offered a group of East Asian animals consisting of 27 specimens (including seven cranes) in eight species, and received the tapirs in exchange. A black rhinoceros, another first in Japan, was too expensive and left Japan without finding a buyer.

The period from the closure of Yano's menagerie to Hagenbeck's visit was marked by continuing militarism. Japan kept on expanding its territory into the vast area of Asia, eventually plunging its people into the ultimate disaster of World War II. As the nation faced grave reality, a contingency plan was in force to destroy "dangerous" animals in circuses and zoos. In one account, in 1943 seven Asian elephants, 52 lions,

two tigers, eight leopards, six bears and 58 snakes, belonging to 28 circus organizations, were to be destroyed.¹³ Many zoo animals were also destroyed by various methods including poisoning, strangulation and in some cases, starvation.

When the war ended in August 1945, the short list of surviving popular zoo animals included three Asian elephants, four giraffes and one chimpanzee. One of the elephants died after a few months, leaving only two in Nagoya.¹⁴ Across the land cities lay in ruins; every essential need including food, clothing and housing was in short supply. Demoralized and devastated, the populace was in dire need for something to brighten their day. Recovery was slow, but trickles of exotic animals began to reach the Japanese shores. These included elephants from southern Asia.

The current generation of Japanese cannot begin to fathom what "peace" meant in the years following the end of war: precious and noble. In this context, the arrival of an elephant carried significance far greater than any other exotic beast coming to town. The local zoo welcoming an elephant reminded citizens that the nightmarish years of military dictatorship and war were now behind them, that they could take families to the zoo again. For them, a zoo symbolized peace; they knew that only during peacetime could a zoo thrive. And without question, the elephant ranks near the top of all essential zoo animals.

Elephants were sorely missed in Tokyo, and children's desire to view a real elephant was mobilized into a campaign. As it gained momentum children sent 815 letters to Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, asking for an elephant. Deeply moved, Nehru granted their wishes. Named Indira after his daughter, the 15-year old female elephant left Calcutta on 29 August 1949, escorted by two mahouts, and arrived at Tokyo on 23 September. Her debut in Ueno Zoo caused a sen-



Ainu, an Indigenous people in Hokkaido, the northern mainland, greeting Indira during the Hokkaido stand of the traveling menagerie, July 1950. Tokyo Zoological Park Society photo.

sation and fervent enthusiasm of Olympic proportions. It was a national event, as Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida himself attended the ceremony to officially receive the elephant at the Zoo on 1 October 1949.¹⁵

Indira was just another work elephant in a timber camp. Fate swept her away from Mysore in southern India; she was appointed an Ambassador of Peace by Nehru, as explained in his letter to the children of Japan. Her arrival signaled the beginning of Ueno Zoo's recovery from the war years. Indira, however, was a gift not only to Tokyo, but to all the children of Japan. While a record crowd (over 3.55 million paid visitors for 1949) flooded Ueno Zoo beyond capacity there was another campaign under way, this time by children of other cities. They asked that Indira visit their hometowns. Children's voices reached Dr. Tadamichi Koga, Ueno Zoo Director, who was Japan's Mr. Zoo.

Ambassador of Peace Hits the Road

Dr. Koga could no longer ignore the petitions from children, and politicians who could pressure the zoo, and a decision was made to take Indira on the road. However it was highly unusual to expect a government-

owned zoo to operate a traveling menagerie, for municipalities are not known for mobility or expediency in such endeavors, then and now. Enter *Asahi Shimbun*, an influential national daily newspaper well experienced in logistics and promotion, and Japan National Railway, known for its efficiency. With them as partners, the zoo was ready for this unprecedented venture.

A total of 18 animals in 13 species was assembled including Indira, a brown bear (later replaced with a lion), two black bears, a Hamadryas baboon, four monkeys (one each of savanna, Japanese, crab-eating and Formosan rock), two red foxes, two raccoon-like dogs, three blue peafowl, a salmon-crested cockatoo and a sulphur-crested cockatoo. It was a modest collection by any standard, but for the eager public it mattered little. Three renovated freight cars were allocated; one for Indira, one for the rest of the animals and equipment and the last one, for the staff. The traveling menagerie began to leave Tokyo on 28 April 1950. The route covered the Eastern and Northern parts of the country that had only one small zoo at that time.

The manager of the traveling team was Ichizo Hashio, a gifted Ph. D., veterinarian and a colonel in the former Imperial Army. Even with his strong leadership Hashio was confronted with challenges daily, such as coping with a sea of people. Dr. Hashio ended up living in a tent for five months. In all locations the menagerie was situated in a lot ranging only 6,600 to 13,200 square meters (1.6 to 3.2 acres). Into this small parcel tens of thousands of visitors poured in; one day in Niigata they recorded 90,000. Indira, the star feature who had been taught basic circus acts while in Tokyo, became ill in the early part of the tour and was unable to perform.

Indira was led from the train to the menagerie lot on foot. Surrounded by hordes of people, this turned into a parade in every city. The public's

heated enthusiasm was reaching its peak when they arrived at Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido, the northern main island on 7 July. Vast crowds raced to see the first elephant in Sapporo in 13 years. By this time Indira became thoroughly accustomed to the life on the road, stepping in and out of the freight car without hesitation. Behind the scenes, however, inversely proportionate to the public's excitement, fatigue descended on the beasts and men like thick rain clouds.

Hectic scheduling aside, Indira's presence carried significance of an international scale. Nehru's elephant represented a brilliant public relations coup for the newly-independent, proud nation, because she became a means to raise the status of India in the international community. At the menagerie sites a translated copy of Nehru's letter to the children of Japan was posted. Many of the visiting public had no idea who Harry S. Truman was, yet they knew the name of India's prime minister.

After the successful and memorable tour, the traveling menagerie returned to Ueno Zoo on 30 September. All total, it traveled 3,500 kilometers, 2,200 miles, visited 17 cities and opened to the public for 111 days. The admission fees were nominal (10 yen for adults, five yen for children). Still, the public attendance of 2,386,902 (21,503 per day on average) brought in sizeable gate receipts. With a part of the revenue, a young female Asian elephant, named Jumbo, was purchased. Adding Hanako, a young Thai female that had arrived in 1949, Ueno Zoo now had three elephants.

During 1951, Ueno Zoo sent a series of traveling menageries to smaller communities in the surrounding areas and on remote islands off the Pacific coast. It was the Zoo's response to the citizens' requests from such communities, all under the jurisdiction of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the owner and operator of the Zoo. Indira stayed in Ueno; it was time for the younger elephants to take to the



American lion trainer Dick Clemens was invited to perform for the seventieth anniversary of Ueno Zoo in Tokyo in the spring of 1952. Tokyo Zoological Park Society photo.

road, always accompanied by a lion. In the meantime Ueno Zoo (opened on 20 March 1882) geared up for a major undertaking, its seventieth anniversary, to be celebrated in a series of special events from 10 March through 31 May 1952.

For this occasion, American circus lion trainer Dick Clemens was invited to take part in the celebration. Clemens, then 51-years old, Anna Gates and eight lions began their journey in San Francisco. While they were sailing toward Honolulu a cub was born, and appropriately named Pacific. The group arrived at Ueno Zoo on 17 March, and two days later the show began (another cub was born on 24 March). Two staff members of the zoo joined Clemens as assistant trainers. Even in the capital city of Tokyo, opportunities for such entertainment were still rare. The lion show was received enthusiastically by large crowds.

After the commemorative events, Ueno Zoo organized another major traveling menagerie with Clemens' show as the feature attraction. The daily newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* became a partner again to do the

promotional work, while local governments en route took up joint sponsorships. The animal inventory increased considerably, compared to the original. The list of 37 animals in 20 species included six show lions, a black leopard, a Hamadryas baboon, four monkeys (two each of Japanese and Formosan rock), a dromedary camel, a boa constrictor, a monitor lizard and Jumbo the elephant. On 8 June 1952, the international team of Japanese and Americans took the animals on the road.

They returned to Ueno Zoo on 1 November after touring 16 cities and communities. These included a run in Sapporo on the Maruyama Zoo grounds from 31 July through 8 August. The triumphant performance

by lions, in a sense, embodied the nostalgic return of Ueno Zoo to this northern city. It was in Sapporo that two years earlier, the overwhelming popularity of the traveling menagerie provided citizens momentum for the final push on the city government to build a zoo.

The phenomenal success of the traveling menageries by Japan's leading zoo brought about unexpected and certainly unintended results. First, the enormous popularity of animals paved the way for a zoo construction boom, which spread into medium to small cities, for example Sapporo. It came at the time when economic recovery was beginning to take hold, allowing municipalities to consider expensive projects such as constructing and operating zoos.

Another factor behind the mushrooming zoos was democracy, a long-forgotten system of governance. Like world peace, democracy was precious, transplanted under an exotic halo by the charismatic General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (Japan was still under Allied occupation). The newly-organized democratic society enabled ordinary citizens to express their voices in the political system. In some cases, grass-root campaigns resulted in the construction of zoos, as seen in the example of Sapporo.

Secondly, Ueno Zoo's success proved lucrative and spawned a re-emergence of commercially operated, large-scale traveling menageries. The miracle of the 1960s, during which Japan achieved its stunning economic rise, was yet to come. But the economy was already moving at an accelerating pace, allowing the populace to enjoy more leisure activities. Citizens' thirst for entertainment provided fertile ground, and menageries delivered trainloads of beasts from far-away lands into their backyard.

Exotic Cargoes Rushing Ashore

During the heyday of the traveling menageries in the mid 1950s there were four major collections touring the country: Sekai Dobutsu Haku (translates to World Animal Expo; a.k.a. Nippon Zoo) and circus-related operations, Shibata, Kinoshita and Arita.¹⁶ Owned by Shikataro Taruya, World Animal Expo was by far the largest.

In the years following the war he toured the country showing a few animals, such as an alligator, from one tourist destination to the other. Taruya saw an opportunity in the rising trend of traveling menageries, starting his own in 1951. Under joint sponsorships with local governments, boards of education or even "the patronage of the Ministry of Education" the business went well.

There were three major wild animal importers in the country then, one each in Tokyo, Yokohama and Kobe. They rode on the crest of rampant demand by menagerie operators, resulting in the "Wild West" scenes of massive importations of an unprecedented magnitude. Wave after wave of exotic animals were unloaded at major ports, and many were sent to Taruya.

In one account¹⁷ Taruya had an impressive line-up for a run in Tokyo, including: five gorillas, two African elephants, 22 Asian elephants, 40 giraffes (15 of them died in the quaran-

tine facility in Yokohama), twenty-plus zebras and several hippos. They chartered 222 (50 in another account) freight cars; wherever they went, crowds formed long lines from early morning. As for animals, the accurate inventory remains a mystery. To visualize the scope of the animal collection, we will use an undated brochure of this menagerie which has a list of "the main collection."

On the list are 326 mammals, 146 birds and four reptiles, or a total of 476 specimens. The species count is far from complete. For example, one would be clueless at "an assortment of 50 monkeys" with no information of the species. At times, as was the practice by zoos and circuses, the descriptions of species were vague. Generic terms such as "8 zebras," "3 oryx" or "2 pythons" are used, but each contains several different species. Likewise oryx, waterbuck and kudu were listed with no detail. Also problematic is "8 penguins." From a small grainy photo two of them appear to be African or Humboldt's; both are warm climate species but not Antarctic, as advertised.

To use rough estimates, it appears that there were 70 species of mammals, 40 species of birds and two species of reptiles. Based on my personal observation these probably represented

Preparing for the show at Ueno Zoo, Dr. Tadamichi Koga, zoo director (second from left) and trainer Dick Clemens (third from left) inspect the lions. Tokyo, spring of 1952. Mary Clemens photo.



resented nearly the entire inventory. Numbers, however, do not tell the whole story. The collection was quite formidable. Some highlights:

Primates: 107 including three lowland gorillas, one orangutan, five chimpanzees, two white-handed gibbons, six Hamadryas baboons, four chacma baboons, two drills, two mandrills, two DeBrazza's monkeys, four patas monkeys, two spider monkeys, 17 capuchins, two marmosets.

Large cats: 56 including 34 lions, 12 tigers, seven leopards (one of them black), two pumas, one cheetah.

Bears: 14 including five polar bears, two brown bears, two Syrian bears, two Himalayan bears, three black bears (Japanese).

Pachyderms: 24 including 15 Asian elephants, two African elephants, two rhinoceroses (believed to be black), three Nile hippopotami and two tapirs (believed to be South American).

Ungulates: 61 including five giraffes, five wart hogs, three peccaries, three sika deer, two yaks, two water buffalo, one American bison, two elands, two nilgai, three oryx, one kudu, two blackbucks, two Grevy zebras, eight zebras.

Other mammals: One striped hyena, two spotted hyenas, four gray wolves, one caracal, one ocelot, one jackal, 10 California sea lions, two fur sea lions, two giant anteaters, six agoutis, two pacas.

Birds: 146 including eight ostriches, two rheas (probably greater), two emus, four cassowaries, two mute swans, three black swans, eight penguins, five roseate pelicans, four Andean condors, three vultures, one golden eagle, two caracaras, three secretary birds, four toco toucans, seven red-breasted toucans, five keel-billed toucans, two curassows, seven blue peafowl, four green peafowl, 10 bleeding-heart doves, one snowy owl, two red-crowned cranes, one white-naped crane, two sarus cranes, two hooded cranes and 10 crown-ed cranes.

In some accounts the World Animal Expo

claimed to hold 10,000 animals in 4,000 species. Maintaining such a huge number of animals requires an enormous foundation of infrastructure, a daunting task even for top-notch zoos equipped with trained staff and a well-oiled organization. The zoo well known for a large collection (particularly in pre-World War II era) was located in the former West Berlin. "In 1939, the Berlin Zoo was the most important in the world with a collection of about 4000 mammals and birds in some 1400 species."¹⁸ This meant that the zoo had a wealth of animal housing, exhibit and mechanical service facilities, supported by a team of experts including veterinary and animal care. Keeping a huge collection alive itself creates daily challenges; the additional hardship of frequent transport on a permanent basis would multiply all conceivable difficulties. The above figure of 10,000 animals represents a case of gross exaggeration.

The World Animal Expo reached its peak around 1954 and 1955. At that time its animal collection was said to have surpassed that of Ueno Zoo, the undisputed top-ranking zoo in Japan. It was a questionable claim in terms of exact numbers of species and specimens (Ueno's 1955 animal inventory included 319 mammals in 105 species and 975 birds in 177 species.) However, the claim sounded convincing as for rarity and sheer public-drawing power of popular mammals, particularly the species that were "firsts." The World Animal Expo made history by introducing the following to the Japanese public for the first time;¹⁹ A pair of lowland gorillas, estimated to be three years of age, arrived at Haneda Airport on 23 December 1954, and made a debut in Kyushu on New Year's day of the following year. (Ueno Zoo did not receive their first gorillas until 17 November 1957.) Three more juveniles joined them in January 1956. The first of the two African elephants, a young male, arrived at the port of Moji in March 1953; he died in January 1956 during



Indria's walk from a train station to the menagerie site turned into a parade in every city. In Akita, August 1950. Tokyo Zoological Park Society photo.

a Tokyo run. A northern elephant seal arrived at Yokohama on 31 March 1955, but died in about half a month. Another male arrived during the same year. Possibly there were more first imports, a challenging subject of study for circus and zoo historians in Japan.

The aforementioned brochure listed three exotic animal acts: A mixed act with three lions, two polar bears and three Syrian bears by Hagenbeck, and a lion act from England. Also, for years veteran American animal trainer Mable Stark worked with them. The famed lady started in 1908 and had worked tigers for 35 years. In August 1954 Miss Stark returned to Los Angeles after 10 months in Japan, and was planning to rejoin the show in October. She pronounced the tour "the best job I ever had in show business." While in Japan she had a personal maid and private car. Her meals were served on a tray in her state room.²⁰

On a personal note, while in high school and college the author visited traveling menageries whenever opportunities arose. It was in the 1950s in southern Japan. With the typical naivete of a high school kid I once commented to Miss Stark that her tigers were "tame." With a smile she looked at me straight, and said that they were trained, not tame. Later, in the waning period of the

World Animal Expo, while in college I briefly worked as a cage boy. I was amazed how Miss Stark maintained personal integrity and pride in her old age, impeccably dressed for every show in the deteriorating conditions of the menagerie.

Popularity of traveling menageries, kick-started by Ueno Zoo and promoted by commercially operated counterparts, continued to encourage city

fathers and citizens across the country to build zoos. This led to the zoo construction boom that swept Japan in the 1950s. Between February 1953 and November 1958, 19 zoos and related facilities, both tax-supported and private, opened (three of them later closed).²¹ Ironically, the births of zoos signaled the distant tolling of the bell; the demise of large-scale traveling menageries was inevitable. Behind the scenes, other factors hastened the process.

The World Animal Expo, like others in those days, was characterized by substandard animal husbandry. Shipping crates were often used as night quarters for animals, and the pool for hippopotami was no more than a metal bath tub. There was no big top as in circuses, and the animal acts were performed in outdoor arenas. For the operators animals were expendable and inadequate care led to high mortality. Combined with mortalities from other traveling menageries of the 1950s, they would add up to a spectacularly wasteful use of wildlife resources, including rare species, condensed into a brief period. It was also a great monetary loss. Protests from overseas were not uncommon. Ueno Zoo received complaints because the import permit application for the aforementioned gorillas was filed for "a Tokyo zoo," as if animals were destined for Ueno.

"Boys, go to town and have fun," said the boss and at the end of the day. The menagerie operators would dole out wads of cash to workers, most of them young men. On the surface the business seemed flourishing. Taruya's business practices,

however, were typified by spending at will without keeping accurate accounting, and a reckless management style that eventually ran him to the ground. Unable to keep paying the ground rent, he began to drop off animals to clear debts. Municipal officials, stuck with abandoned animals, contacted Ueno Zoo, inquiring about the monetary value of the animals or asking what to do with them.

By the time the 1960s rolled in, the large-scale traveling menageries were on their way out. The World Animal Expo transferred the small number of remaining animals, including gorillas and hippopotami, to a permanent exhibit facility in Beppu, one of the best-known hot-spring resorts in Japan. This, however, was not the last nail in the coffin of traveling menageries. For instance, another operation, also named the World Animal Expo, emerged in the 1970s.²²

To commemorate the sister-city relationship between Sapporo and Munich, Germany, a menagerie was opened in Sapporo, featuring 200 animals in 50 species including elephants, lions and giraffes. In the center lay a circular show arena measuring 10 meters in diameter (33 feet) and three meters high (10 feet). A German animal trainer conducted a 40-minute show which included a single animal act with a black leopard, a mixed act (lion, leopard and jaguar) with a finale of tug of war between two tigers and visitors. However, all the attractions failed to increase attendance and the menagerie closed with a large debt. To pay off the debt, traveling continued with a reduced animal collection. A full tour up and down the archipelago took a month and a half, moving in 20 large trucks. The animal trainer returned to Germany in the spring of 1974, replaced with a chimpanzee trainer from Mexico.

A drama unfolded in the summer of 1975, which illustrated the dwindling viability of traveling menageries. In Naha, Okinawa, a menagerie from the mainland went bankrupt and its operators skipped town. Left behind was an army of animals including elephant, gorilla, chimpanzee and hippopotamus. In desperation the *Okinawa Times*, the

newspaper which sponsored the menagerie, requested that a small local zoo accept them as an emergency measure (very little was reported about this drama). Although more than half of the animals died after settling in at the zoo, the abandoned animals were a boost for this small facility.²³

Today, traveling menageries are not quite extinct. With much reduced collections they are surviving, opening their businesses in the backyards of kindergartens and on department store rooftops (department stores in Japan are a unique cultural phenomenon, just as are large American shopping malls). In one estimate, there are 10 currently in operation.

However, the days of large-scale traveling menageries are behind us. Television delivers images of wild animals into the living room. The public has access to a variety of animals, as Japan has more zoos than ever. The society's view on wild animals has also shifted, partly thanks to vocal anti-captivity movements by news-media savvy animal advocate groups. In addition, national and international import restrictions make it difficult to obtain animals, because of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), an agreement between governments, entered in force in 1975. The 1950s marked an era we will never witness again; the smell of sawdust, crowds applauding animal acts and row after row of exotic animals in crude cages live only in the history books.

The author would like to express sincere appreciation for those who have made this account possible by kindly providing material, including literature and photos. They are (in alphabetical order): Mr. Iwao Akune, Mrs. Mary Clemens, Ms. Yukiko Hiraiwa, Ms. Kyoko Kuroda, Ms. Yoriko Mochimaru, Mr. Richard Reynolds III and Mr. Kako "Yoshi" Yonetani.

Bibliography

For history and culture of Japan: Edwin O. Reischauer, *The Japanese* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of

Harvard University Press, 1981); Ian McQueen, *Japan, a Travel Survival Kit* (Berkeley: Lonely Planet Publications, 1986).

For Japanese zoo history: Ken Kawata, "Zoological Gardens of Japan", in *Zoo and Aquarium History* (Boca Raton: edited by Vernon N. Kisling, CRC Press, 2001), pp. 295-330.

Japanese titles have been arbitrarily translated. For exotic animals imported to Japan: Haruo Takashima, *Animal Tales* (Tokyo: Yasaka Shobo, 1986). His landmark work on the history of exotic animal importation, originally published in 1955 and included in this volume, still remains peerless today.

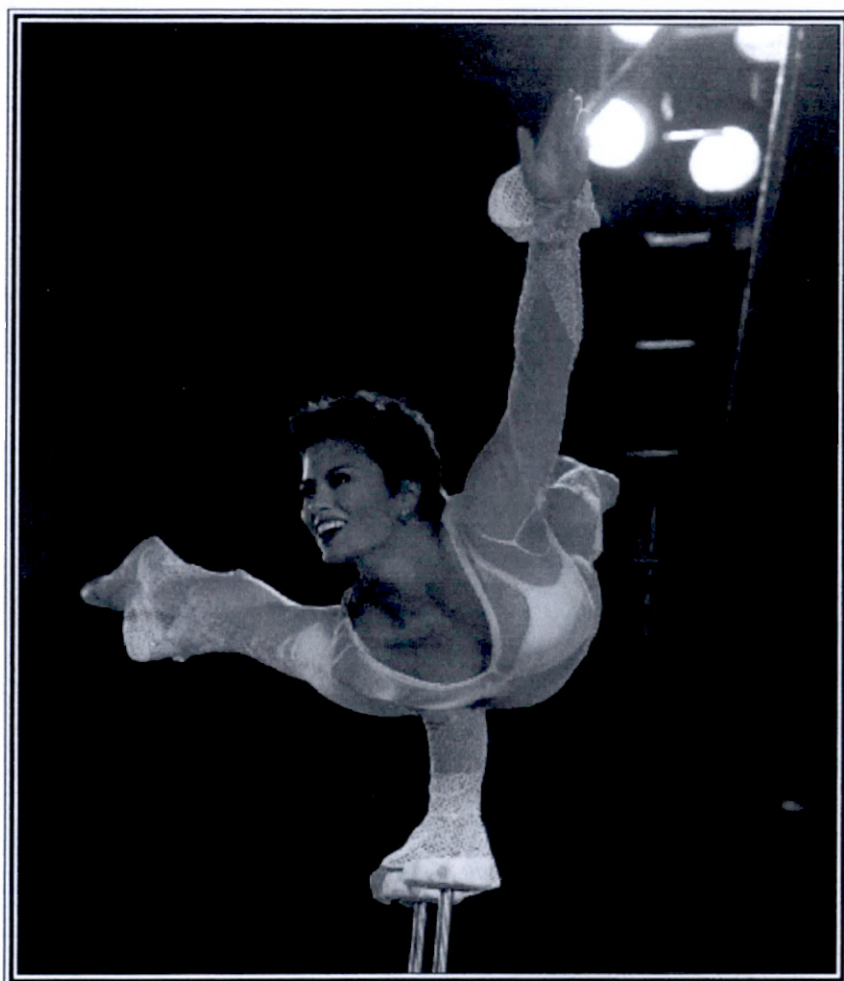
1. Takashima, *ibid.*
2. Yutaka Kawasoe, *Exhibitory in Edo* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000).
3. Kawasoe, *ibid.*
4. Takashima, *ibid.*
5. Iwao Akune, *Circus History*, Second printing (Tokyo: Nishida Shoten, 1984).
6. Iwao Akune, *Birth of the Circus* (Tokyo: Arina Shobo, 1988).
7. Ueno Zoo, *Ueno Zoo: The 100 Year History* (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 1982).
8. Kawasoe, *ibid.*
9. Akune 1988, *ibid.*
10. Hirotsugu Ozaki, *Circuses of Japan* (Tokyo: Mitume Shobo, 1958).
11. Lorenz Hagenbeck, *Animals Are My Life* (London: The Bodley Head, 1956), p. 164.
12. Akune 1988, *ibid.*
13. Kinoshita Circus, *History, Kinoshita Circus 1864-2002* (Undated internal document).
14. Kawata, *ibid.*
15. Ueno Zoo, *ibid.*
16. Ozaki, *ibid.*
17. Yasuhiko Miyajima, *Japan's Hippopotamus Chronicle* (Tokyo: Jouhou Senta Shuppankyoku, 1991).
18. Heinz-Georg Klos, translated by Hans Fradrich, *Guide Book to the Zoological Gardens of Berlin*, Seventh revised edition (Berlin: Zoologischer Garten Berlin, 1984), p. 8.
19. Takashima, *ibid.*
20. Anon., "Mable Stark Returns, Tells of Japanese Show," *Billboard* 28 August 1954, p. 102.
21. Ueno Zoo, *ibid.*
22. Hideyo Tsutsumi, *Thanks for the Chimpanzees*, Second printing (Tokyo: Freberukan, 2004).
23. Miyajima, *ibid.*

EASTERN STATES EXPOSITION

In Conjunction With Tommy & Struppi Hanneford

Presents

THE BIG E SUPER CIRCUS



SEPTEMBER 15 – OCTOBER 1, 2006



Eastern States Exposition • 1305 Memorial Avenue • West Springfield, Massachusetts 01089
Telephone 413-737-2443 • Fax 413-787-0127 • www.thebige.com

Wayne McCary, President

BIG APPLE CIRCUS



For tour dates and ticket prices call 800.922.3772, or visit bigapplecircus.org

CELEBRATE CIRCUS

THE JOHN AND MABLE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART
SARASOTA, FLORIDA



Collection of
The Ringling Circus Museum

RINGLING CIRCUS MUSEUM'S TIBBALS LEARNING CENTER

Premiere Opening of the
HOWARD BROS. CIRCUS,
the largest miniature circus in the world.
JANUARY 14, 2006

CIRCUS SPECTACULAR RINGLING FESTIVAL

Saturday & Sunday • January 28 - 29, 2006 • 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Fun for children of all ages featuring CIRCUS SARASOTA.

Windjammers Unlimited - Concert of Circus Band Music

Museum Courtyard • 2:30 p.m. • Saturday only

Advance Tickets: 941.358.3180

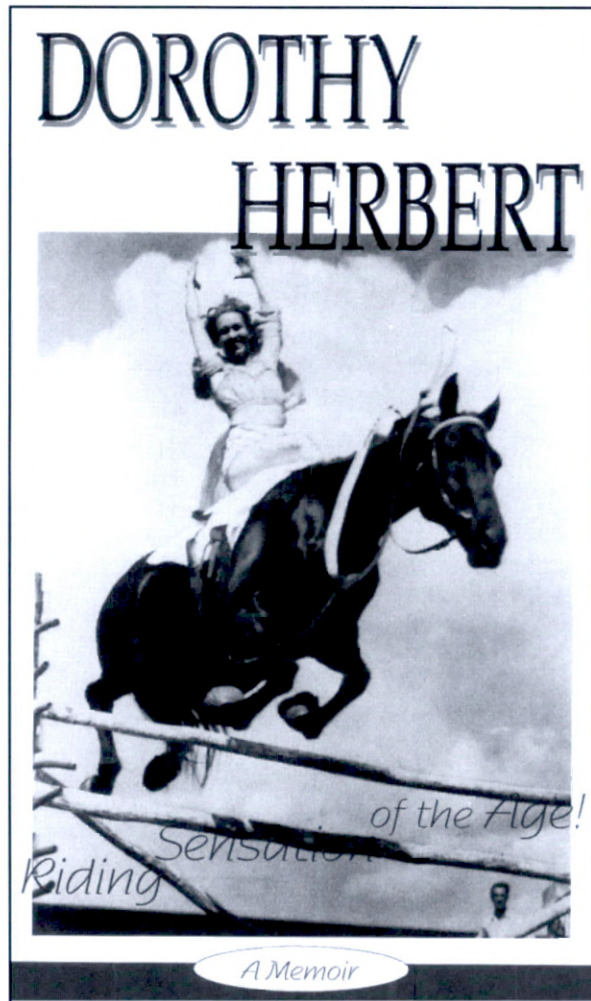


THE JOHN AND MABLE
RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART
The State Art Museum of Florida

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

5401 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota, FL 34243
(941) 359-5700, www.ringling.org

**IT'S SHOW TIME.
IT'S CIRCUS TIME
THE CIRCUS LIFE Of
DOROTHY HERBERT**
The Riding Sensation Of The Ages.



READ HER MEMOIRS
A Wonderful Christmas Present
\$14.50 plus \$2.50 postage and handling.

Order now. Make checks payable to CATS, (The Circus and Traveling Shows Retirement Project, Inc). Mail to Dale Riker, P. O. Box 361, Tallevast, FL 34270-0361



By Fred D. Pfening, Jr.

Shortly after introducing Varekai in 2002 Cirque du Soleil began planning a new touring show for 2005. The working title was Cirque 2005.

The theme was a joyous procession, a festive parade imagined by a clown, bringing together the passions of the actor with the grace and power of the acrobat to plunge the audience into a theatrical world of fun, comedy and spontaneity situated in a mysterious space between heaven and earth.

The clown pictures his own funeral taking place in a carnival atmosphere, watched over by quietly caring angels. Juxtaposing the large with the small, the ridiculous with the tragic and the magic of perfection with the charm of imperfection, the show highlighted the strength and fragility of the clown, as well as his wisdom and kindness, to illustrate the humanity that is within of each of us. The music, by turns lyrical and playful, carried the performance through a timeless celebration in which illusion teased reality.

Executive producer Guy Laliberte selected the team to develop the show. Daniele Finzi Pasca was creator and director. Line Tremblay was director of creation. Jean Rabasse and Dominique Lemieux were set designers. Philippe Leduc was composer and music director. Martin Kabrecque was lighting designer. Danny Zen was acrobatic rigging designer.

Line Tremblay, a Soleil veteran who started with first production in 1984, had been a part of the cre-

ation of Mystere, Alegria, Quidam, "O" and La Nouba.

Jean Rabasse and Daniele Pasca decided to divide the rotating stage in two, with half the audience facing the other half, so each side would be able to see the performance but also have the performers' point of view of the audience beyond. Two turntables were built into the stage, which was about 104 feet long and the track was nearly 41 feet long.

To create the costumes Dominique Lemieux wanted to accentuate the natural beauty of the artists. This theatrical approach distinguished it from all previous Soleil shows. She wanted to be closer to traditional circus, in which the humanity of the artists would be revealed. That translated into costumes that resembled regular street clothes.

The Corteo lot in Toronto, Ontario. Al Stencell photo.

The cast of the new production brought together fifty-five artists from sixteen countries.

The acts included: adagio duet, artist marionette, bouncing beds (trampoline), chandeliers (aerial acrobatics), Cyr wheel, juggling, golf, unsupported ladder, little horses, not so serious act (flexible jugglers), paradise (net trampoline), teeterboard, tight wire and tournik (horizontal bars).

While the creative team developed the performance another group bought and made the physical equipment to move and house the show. Around 65 trucks and trailers were required, including power generators, dining facilities and dressing rooms.

The lot layout was the standard Soleil group of tents. The Grand Chapiteau and other tents were yellow with blue swirls. The big top seated 2,700 patrons.

The "Patience" was a massive arched steel structure which dominated the interior of the Grand Chapiteau. It was one of the most complex pieces of equipment in the show and was used to transport various scenic elements and pieces of acrobatic equipment on and off the stage from above.

On April 5, 2005, during a worldwide press conference broadcast on the Web, Soleil introduced its newest touring show, Corteo. The event included acts from the show and interviews with the creators.

The show opened on April 21 in Montreal. Even in a well oiled





Cirque du Soleil photo.

organization such as Cirque du Soleil difficulties arose on opening night.

Variety's opening night review read in part, "A nightmarish opening night marred by technical difficulties makes it difficult to form an accurate opinion of 'Corteo,' the latest touring show from Cirque du Soleil. But even in its current state, this is a work of great potential. Several very real problems can be ironed out.

"A generator short-circuited halfway through the first act on opening night, causing the computer controlling the show's complex rigging system to malfunction and bringing the performance to a halt. It restarted 40 minutes later, but a great deal of momentum was lost. In the end, with a late start and overly lengthy intermission taken into account, the show's running time was close to four hours, 80 minutes longer than scheduled.

"Bad luck contributed to the problem. Of course, but Cirque's decision to launch each of its touring shows in Montreal after only one or two previews is equally to blame. By comparison, 'Ka,' its latest resident show in Las Vegas, previewed for close to 10 weeks before facing the media.

"Corteo introduces a new creative figure to the Cirque family: Daniele Finzi Pasca. The Italo-Swiss artist is best known as the guiding force behind Teatro Sunil, a dance-theater enterprise with a strong emphasis on the art of the clown. Finzi Pasca also is the creator of 'Nomade' for Cirque Eloize.

"The new creator-director brings a strong sense of the dramatic to 'Corteo,' which is a good thing, since some recent Cirque touring shows have seemed unduly loose from a conceptual point of view.

"Corteo (the Italian word for funeral procession) is supposedly inspired by a clown's deathbed ruminations. This provides a solid framework for the show and, when it works, offers a rich frame of reference. But in its current state, the concept is seemingly abandoned for long stretches of time and some of those ambitious but unmotivated aerial acts take over that make Cirque, at its worst, seem like the acrobatic answer to 'The Ed Sullivan Show.'

"Six 'characters' are listed on the program, but except for the central figure of the dead clown (played by Mauro Mozzani with more emphasis on the 'dead' than on the 'clown'), only incidental use is made of them.

"While Finzi Pasca's dramatic ideas still need developing, his visual sense is strong and original. For the first time in its 17 productions created over the past 21 years, Cirque has produced a show that does not wrap the audience around three sides of the playing area, arena-style. Pasca has boldly divided the playing area in half. The spectators sit facing each other while the action takes place in the middle. It allows for some wonderful horizontal effects, as funeral processions weave through the show in Felliniesque fashion and angels sail through the sky like a Chagall painting gone mad.

"Unfortunately, this makes the excursions into the gymnastic acts, which still form the backbone of the evening, seem a bit jarring. Having said that, some of the artists on display are among the most impressive Cirque has assembled, especially Anastasia Bykovskaya. She begins by traversing a wire on a unicycle. Then the wire tilts to an almost impossible 45-degree angle, and Bykovskaya scales it calmly.

"But if the acrobatics are even better than ever, the humorous acts—always a Cirque weak point—are among the worst in recent memory. Two sequences, one involving golf and the other centering on a shower of rubber chickens, should be replaced as soon as possible.

"All in all, Corteo is filled with intriguing possibilities and informed by an original creative point of view. It needs time, however, to shake down into a form that will do it justice."

The *Variety* review was pretty tough on the show. Most of the criticism leveled by reviewer Richard Ouzounian was quickly remedied by the producers long before the show left Montreal.

Corteo moved to Quebec City, opening on June 30, staying there until July 17. The orange and blue tents opened in Toronto on August 4.

Toronto's *Soul Shine* magazine's writer Lindsay Whitfield was impressed with the performance. "In the crowd don't whet your appetite for the performance of a lifetime, perhaps the divinely air conditioned blue and yellow tents lined with gourmet goodies and helpful staff will.

"A performance of Cirque du Soleil is truly full of surprises. If a bevy of Canadians, like familiar faces from Chum Television and Toronto 1.

"The performance was done in the round, but the audience was only surrounding the stage from one side to the other, the performers entrances and exits were made to walk directly through the circle so both audiences could see the brilliance of the acrobats, the singing angels floating above, and the somberly breathtaking costumes of the circus in the Victorian era.

"Although all of the performance

left me in complete awe, some stand out moments of the evening were when a woman put on some ballet shoes and tip toed across a tight rope, unicycled across the rope, walked across hula hoping with a couple of hoops, and walked up an incline on a tight rope with ease.

"Another mouth dropping segment was when the lead clown brought out a little woman who was sitting in a swing that was attached to massive clear balloons. The clown pushed her out into the audience and she said, 'Hello, bonjour' to the crowd in a very high voice that was so endearing. You think to yourself, 'Am I dreaming, or am I actually seeing a little woman float in front of me attached to massive clear balloons?' There was also a great choreographed portion of the show where the performers were dressed as little kids and were bouncing on these huge trampoline beds. The girls would dive from one bed together, the guys would do spins in the air and land perfectly on the bed posts, and one guy bounced a girl (who was crunched up in a ball) as if she were a basketball."

New Wave Circus aficionado Ernest Albrecht visited *Corteo* in Canada. His comments included: "The director of *Corteo* is Danele Finzi Pasca who has dedicated his production to, among other things, the circuses and their artists he has known in his youth. 'I've sought to bring theater and its perspective, full of superimposing images, to the big top,' he says in the program notes. 'I've asked acrobats to think like actors, to be as beautiful and honest as true love.'"

"If one is interested in where the circus is going, that last statement, I believe, points the direction in which it is headed, with acrobats who think like actors. And here we can see how enormously affecting this combination of skills can be.

"The physical set up is extraordinary, filled with those superimposed images Pasca speaks of. (How rare it is, by the way, to actually experience in three-dimensional reality the abstract ideas a director likes to suggest has animated his work.) I hesitate to describe in detail the physical arrangement of the big top for fear of

robbing future audiences of the pleasure of figuring it out for themselves, but the effect is almost like looking into a mirror. It took me several intriguing minutes before I realized what I was seeing. But even afterwards the effect continued to be enchanting.

"There is some wonderfully energetic and forceful juggling in a display that exudes confidence and dazzle.

"There is some brief work on the newest

addition to circus paraphernalia, the Cyr wheel, by Jeremie Robert. This is the single large hoop, a fascinating variation on the German wheel. There are a female tightrope walker, contortionists, and the free standing ladder act of Uzeyer Novrusov, which we had previously seen on *Big Apple* and at the *Big E*.

"All these circus skills are beautifully integrated into the whole panorama of images from the past. And the humor is inherent in the material, instead of tacked on as gags or clowning superimposed for the sake of change of pace or comic relief."

Corteo closed in Toronto on September 11 and moved to Minneapolis for a September 23 opening.

Minneapolis *Star Tribune* writer Graydon Royce published this review on September 25. "We critics should quit blabbering about 'spectacle' when we describe big-budget stage musicals that mass 40 people in colorful costumes around some smoke and mirrors. If these are 'spectacles,' then what is the unreal world of *Cirque du Soleil*?"

"The U.S. premiere of *Cirque's* latest show, '*Corteo*,' opened Friday night at Parade Stadium, next to the Sculpture Garden in Minneapolis.

Underneath the blue-and-yellow Chapiteau, '*Corteo*' lives a surreal existence, built on consummate physical feats--aerial dance, juggling, gymnastics, tumbling and high wire walking. Its capacity to make you



The unusual horizontal bar act. *Cirque du Soleil* photo.

drop your jaw may depend on your familiarity with *Cirque's* work. Regardless, this artistry and physical virtuosity deserve your attention.

"Daniele Finzi Pasca, a Swiss theater artist, conceived '*Corteo*' as a funeral march--a joyous procession in which a clown (Mauro Mozzani) is laid out, awaiting transport to heaven (we can assume that's where he's going, given the angels suspended high above). Story aside, though, Pasca and his creative team are after amazing imagery.

"One example: Set designer Jean Rabasse rigged two beds with trampolines, a playground for tumblers who look like insomniac kids, bouncing high and balancing on the headboards (don't try this at home) and leaping from mattress to mattress.

"Then there are aerialists twirling from huge chandeliers, Anastasia Bykovskaya walking the high wire, acrobats who build excruciating tension and floods of relief and jugglers who simply dazzle. The action achieves an odd paradox in its frenzy: It is both distracting and mesmerizing.

"The best moments of the second act involve an opening sequence with a long, springy net for tumbling and then a display of trapeze precision. Two tiny performers, Valentyna and Grigor Pahlevanyan, create a small jewel of balance and human sculp-

ture bathed in blue light. Valentyna has the nicest clowning scene; buoyed up by three giant helium balloons, she drifts across the audience like a beach ball.

"Unfortunately, that is the only memorable clown moment. A longish spoof of 'Romeo and Juliet' goes deadly flat. Oh well; the acrobats needed a breather, right? Too, the ending—a flawless and entertaining display of gymnasts on high bars (six at once!)-doesn't quite beat with the palpitating heart of climax.

"These quibbles aside, 'Corteo' is grand. Pasca's keen eye creates exquisite tableaux, Philippe Leduc and Maria Bonzanigo fill the room with evocative music and Danny Zen has engineered an extraordinary rigging structure that brings this dream to life. Extravaganza, marvel, whatever you wish to call it, this really is a spectacle."

Herbert B. Uecker, who has reviewed many circuses, penned these comments: "Minneapolis was the site of the first stateside appearance of Cirque du Soleil's new production entitled 'Corteo' during September and October, 2005. The show was created and directed by Daniele Finzi Pasca and was presented under the sparkling new blue and yellow trademark grand chapiteau. As is the case with Cirque du Soleil, all equipment was first-rate and in exquisite condition. Patrons entered through a reception tent where refreshments and expensive gift items were available for purchase. Adult ticket prices ranged from \$41.00 to \$185.00.

"Corteo" is the Italian word for 'cortege,' a funeral procession, and in the show's theme the dying clown contemplates his mortality surrounded by angels flying overhead and by acrobats and performers of all sorts on stage. This stage, or performance area, is elevated and elongated with performers' entrances and exits at either end, and it cleverly bisects the seating areas. Odd numbered sections occupy one half of the tent an even numbered sections the other, providing audience members a mirror image of their counterparts on the opposite side of the tent. Transparent curtains on either



The trampoline and aerial chandelier act. Cirque du Soleil photo.

side of the stage further enhance the setting.

"The performance is decidedly upbeat and actually is filled with quite a bit of humor. For the most part it is possible to understand the story line and what is going on—not always true in some Cirque productions. Excellent lighting sets 'Corteo' apart from some of Cirque's other sometimes dark performances.

"The show opens with the clown on his deathbed which turns into a trampoline. Girls perform on several huge chandeliers in a unique aerial display. Some of the exceptional and noteworthy offerings in the first half of the show were Cyr wheels (sort of a version of the German gym wheel taken from the name of creator Daniel Cyr), a teeterboard act by three guys (among the show's strongest acts) whose twists and turns and somersaults were amazing, and the ascension of a midget beneath huge balloons swinging out over the audience to their delight. Indeed the performing midget couple and a giant clown character (yes, a

real giant) seemingly captivated the audience and lent an almost side show flavor to the production. A jargo act was a bit out of place perhaps, and the juggling and high wire presentations were examples of displays which lacked much special technical excellence but rather were memorable in their presentation—another Cirque du Soleil trademark.

"After intermission a superb casting act opened the second half with four brawny catchers doing amazing and unbelievable aerial maneuvers with their female projectiles. A combination rhythmic gymnastics-contortion act by one male and two females was humorously accentuated by falling rubber chickens. The brilliant strap act by a single young lady was also among the superior offerings, as was the skill on the unsupported ladder by a male purveyor of this art in a rapid routine. Add in a comedy theater version of Romeo and Juliet and a

whistling ringmaster, and it is possible to sense the real variety of this show.

"The final display was a rousing one on tournik (parallel bars) by a large troupe with the entire cast on stage.

"The absence of masks, headgear, and elaborate makeup enable the audience actually to see the performers' faces and to identify them—not always true in Cirque productions. Original musical accompaniment was by four musicians and two vocalists.

"There is every reason to expect that 'Corteo' will enjoy a long and successful run, and indeed it may go down as one of the giant and wealthy Canadian entertainment company's best."

While many traditional American circuses have begun to blend in some Cirque-style effects, Cirque du Soleil, in Corteo, appears to have moved slightly in the direction of the traditional circus.

Corteo opened in San Francisco on November 11 and will stay until January 8.



Hawthorn White Tigers

THE HAWTHORN CORPORATION

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Illinois Quarters:
9819 N. Solon Road
Richmond, IL 60071
(815) 678-9955

Florida Quarters:
4645 Ainsley Place
Sarasota, FL 34234

Office
All Correspondence To:
23675 W. Chardon Road
Grayslake, IL 60030-9584
USA

Tel: (847) 546-0717
Fax: (847) 546-3454

Bill Woodcock's Circus Album

My maternal grandfather R. Z. Orton took a small overland show out of Ortonville, Iowa for many years. There was hardly a town there at all but merely a whistle stop on the electric line between Des Moines and Adel. They pretty much made the same route every year in Iowa, Minnesota and the Dakotas, strictly "high grass." My dad always referred to them as a bunch of "Iowa farmers."

R. Z.'s brother was Miles Orton, a much better known showman. He would boast "I had a big railroad show bound for California when the Ringlings were wearing wooden shoes in McGregor, Iowa." Miles had two sons, Gordon and Myron, who actually presented their wire act at the London Palladium. In later years both were with Ringling-Barnum for many seasons. Gordon presented a liberty act and Myron was a clown.

R. Z.'s show, however, did well enough to enable him to buy consid-

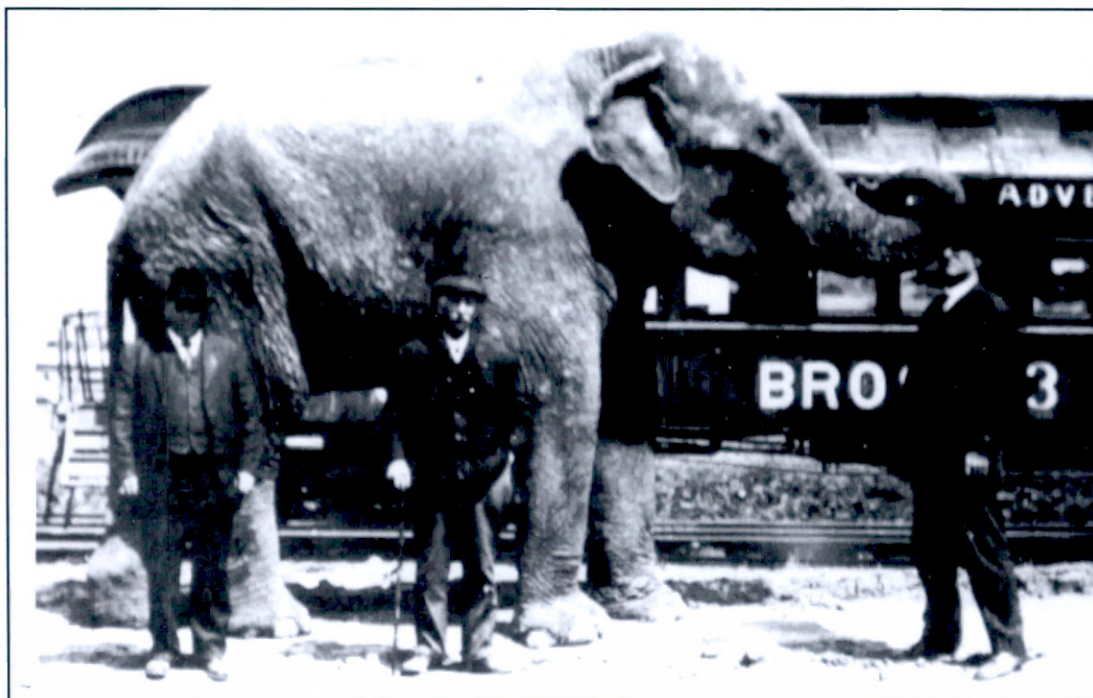


erable real estate in the Des Moines area and when the show wasn't on the road, the family would build houses by hand themselves for rental.

After a few very good seasons, R. Z. Made the fatal error in early 1916 of going down to William P. Hall's circus brokerage in Lancaster, Missouri with the thought of putting the show

on rails. Hall knew a live one when he saw one and playing on R. Z.'s vanity, loaded him up with twice the show he could afford.

Included in the deal was a large male elephant named Hero who had been with Norris and Rowe and in more recent years with Lucky Bill Newton. The Orton railroad circus had three coaches, each one titled with the names of R. Z.'s three

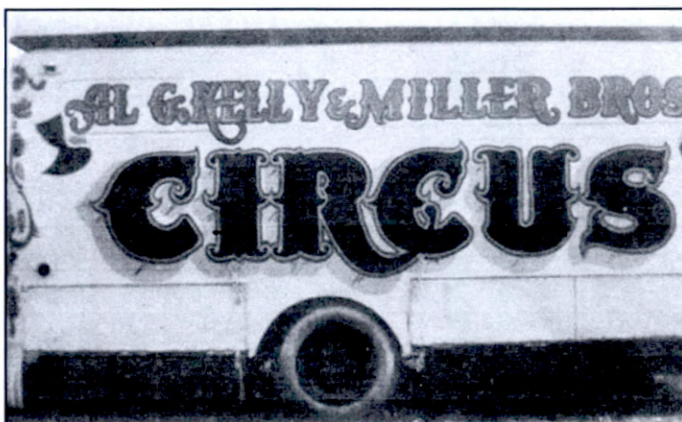


daughters, Grace, Nellie and my mother Sarah.

The show went on its way but the little towns they always played couldn't make the nut and when being routed into the bigger cities, they were unknown. An unusually rainy spring was the finishing touch.

The highlight of the season came when the big elephant Hero demolished the show. My mother said they were playing Elkton, South Dakota, and the train was spotted along side the lot. She looked out the window of the coach just in time to see Hero in hot pursuit of his handler. The man, although injured, managed to roll under a wagon and out the other side, barely escaping as Hero tipped the wagon over on top of him. He managed to make it inside one of the coaches to safety.

My mother described her terror as Hero walked along side the coaches looking in the windows for his prey. It must have been like something out of Jurassic Park. Hero continued down the tracks, pushing several wagons off the flat cars and then it was off to the races out in the countryside. The local citizenry quickly



The lady driving the hitch is Arky Scott's wife Helen.

The third picture shows one of the six massive howdahs Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey used in their 1933 spec. George W. Smith, long-time Ringling-Barnum executive, took notes on everything including the 1933 elephant herd and

even the names of the elephants in each act. Fred Pfenning was gracious enough to give me access to these notes. This was the "Golden Jubilee Season," marking the 50th anniversary since the Ringlings took their first show out in 1884. Today, the show counts from the Barnum show's first season in 1871.

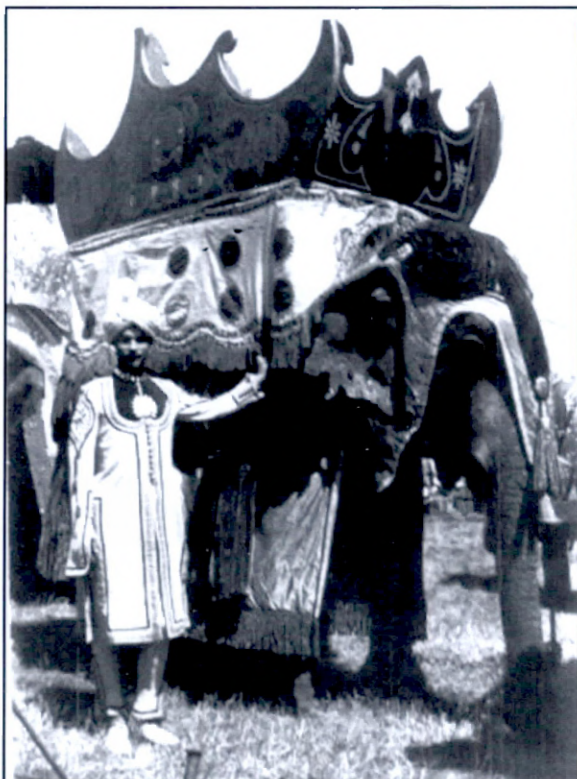
There were 18 elephants in the 1933 spec featuring Big Modoc who, along with a show girl, was painted entirely gold. Eva pulled a float. Minnie and Dolly were dressed in clown suits. Eight others had gold blankets and six carried these howdahs.

Then there were 23 performing elephants, three groups of five with a four act in each end ring. The two five acts working on each side of the center ring performed on stages. Imagine the prop crew having to assemble two stages heavy enough to support five elephants and move every day.

The show proclaimed "50 elephants for the 50th Anniversary," but they only carried 41. The man in this photo is most certainly the performer who rode in the howdah. He is altogether too neat and clean to be an elephant man.

I've never understood why the vehicle in this next picture has never been unearthed and restored at Circus World Museum. It was quite a sensation when it was delivered to Kelly-Miller in mid-season 1951. It was sort of a Cirque du Toilette of its day.

Prior to this for as long as I could remember all circuses from Ringling on down used "doniker tops" for both public and private use. I remember the one in the back yard was about an eight foot square tent in which a



hole was dug, two jacks situated on each end of the trench and a board with holes laid across the jacks. It was, in other words, a portable outhouse.

With this remarkable invention you stepped into a room about eight foot square where you were greeted by the doniker board with a hole dug under it, the theory being that it eliminated putting up the tent. However, by the time you lowered the flaps, cranked down the levelers on each corner and figured out how to dig a hole under the permanently installed seats, you would have long since had the tent up and the hole dug.

When it arrived on the show, it had "Ione's Special" painted on it out of respect for our concession manger Ione Stevens. D. R. Miller had some sort of post hole digger installed behind a tractor on the theory that the holes could be dug and the trailer spotted over the holes. This, of course, proved impossible without the aid of some sort of navigational instrument. Furthermore some scurrilous scoundrels who were tired of waiting would use the doniker where it sat before the holes were dug.

On the two doors the logical words "men" and "women" were painted but in an act of modesty D. R. had small flaps installed that covered these words en route. Over a period of time the novelty wore off and no one bothered to lower these flaps since everyone on the show knew that ladies used the front half and gents the back.

One day, I was making use of the facility when a school teacher with a string of kids stuck her head in the door and said, "I wonder what they keep in here? Oops!" The most dreaded time was after the



trailer was moved at night and the man whose job it was to cover the hole hadn't yet done so. Many a brave soul made the dive of death.

The last two photographs document the career of Tusko, one of the biggest male elephants ever on an American circus. The first one is an unusual shot of him taken in 1921 on the Al. G. Barnes Circus, just after he was purchased from M. L. Clark's show. The only hardware he is wearing is a martingale. With the Clark Circus he walked overland and as this picture shows he was still pretty rawboned.

The Barnes elephants didn't march to the lot and back in a herd. As each team was unloaded they would take a wagon to the lot and

bring it back at night. This peculiar combination has just arrived on the lot with Tusko in the lead and Vance and Barney on the pole.

Getting three square meals a day and not having to walk from town to town was unbecoming to Tusko whose original name was Ned. He became more massive and dangerous as time went on and more chains were added.

Our last shot shows Tusko in 1930 when he was pretty much out of control. Ruth, the elephant on the right, is set to pull him ahead if necessary. Behind him in the car is another elephant who is fastened to his drag chain to serve as a brake. The following year Tusko was given to Slim Lewis who retired him to the Seattle Zoo.





If you would like one of our 2006 American Circus Calendars, please send \$3.00 to cover postage and handling.

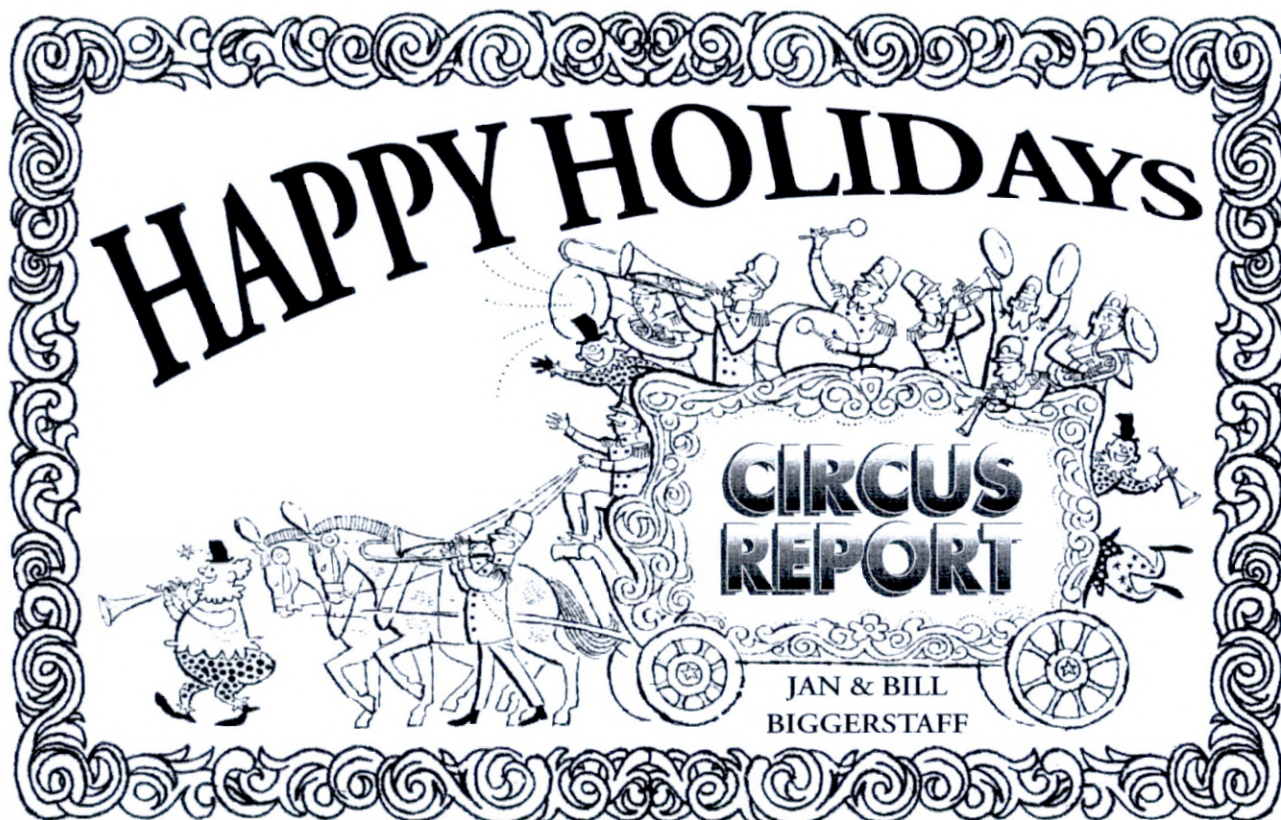
GRAPHICS 2000 • 6290 HARRISON DRIVE • SUITE 16 • LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89120



Eleanor B. Pepion
1907–2004

The Wisconsin Historical Society and Circus World Museum Foundation gratefully acknowledge the generous gift of \$254,000 in March of 2004 from the estate of Eleanor B. Pepion of Sarasota, Florida. She was well known as a longstanding enthusiast of the American circus. The Society and Circus World Museum honor the memory of Mrs. Pepion and wish to express sincere thanks for her support at a most difficult period in the museum's history. Her generosity helped to ensure the continuation of Circus World Museum.

CIRCUS WORLD MUSEUM FOUNDATION
550 WATER STREET
BARABOO, WISCONSIN 53913





WISHES
YOU AND YOURS

Happy
Holidays!

JIM ELLIOTT
GENERAL MANAGER



Side Lights On The Circus Business

PART FORTY TWO

By David W. Watt

Editor's note. The dates listed are the dates the article appeared in the Janesville, Wisconsin Daily Gazette.

October 26, 1918

On Wednesday of last week I spent the day in Chicago, and I always spend a little time at the Showmen's League club rooms, for it is there that I always meet a few old-timers. As the show closed early this season and but little doing for circus people in the Majestic or other circuits, there were more than the usual number visiting at the club rooms.

While visiting with an old-timer with whom I traveled many years, he asked me many questions concerning the people that he had traveled with more than 30 years ago with the Adam Forepaugh show. Among those he asked for was "Lizzie Ashton," the famous bareback rider, and "Kate Silbon" of the famous Silbon troupe of aerial artists that Adam Forepaugh brought over to this country from England in '84. These were two of the nicest girls connected with the show and the ones that he felt the most interest in. Lizzie Ashton came to the front in the early '80s as the famous bareback rider. As a rule, I saw but little of Lizzie except occasionally when I would see her riding in her act and every Wednesday when she would come to the ticket wagon after her pay for the week. Lizzie was a handsome girl with beautiful complexion and always came to the ticket wagon with a smile on her face. I said to her one day, "Lizzie, about the only time that I see you is when you are riding or are at the ticket wagon after your money, but whenever I see you, you always have a smile on your face. I

have often wondered whether it was the payday smile or if it were natural. I could readily see why you smile and bowed to the audience while they encored your great riding act and possibly your tutor who taught you the business is accountable for that." While Lizzie was handsome and interesting to visit with, in a way she was handicapped by one of those saw filing voices which after a time got on one's nerves.

It was on a long Sunday run when a dozen or more boys and girls had brought their lunch into my state room where they usually congregated at the noon hour and visited while on this long run, that Lizzie got on a long streak of talking. After a while I said to her: "Lizzie, I would like to trade you my part of your long story for one of your smiles." She then told me that I was getting to be kind of a "crank." I then said: "Lizzie, I don't mean to be, but that sharp voice of

yours seems to get on my nerves." Lizzie then turned to me and said: "Dave, this is the last long story that I will ever tell you, and when I see you come into the big top to watch my act, if I smile, it is not for you, and the next time that I come to the ticket wagon, it will be with a scowl on my face." I then said: "Now, don't take this to heart. If you come to the ticket wagon next Wednesday after your pay with a scowl on your face, you will stand there until you smile before you will get your salary." But after all this, Lizzie and I were the best of friends, and she was not only high classed in her business, but one of the nicest women that I ever knew.

The other one that he asked for was Kate Silbon, who was not handsome to look at, but she had a college education and was a real lady and had traveled in every civilized country in the world and was one of the most interesting women to talk with that I ever knew. She was the kind that would always wear well and one who you were always glad to introduce to your friends. Of the seven Silbons that came to this country in '84, Eddie, the youngest of the family is still one of the famous aerial artists of the Seigrist & Silbon Company who for so many years had

A 1916 Barnum & Bailey Circus Sunday run watering and feed stop. All illustrations are from the Pfening Archives.



been one of the big features with the Barnum & Bailey show. The last time that the Barnum show was here I had a long visit with Eddie and he told me that Kate had married a wealthy rancher in Montana. He said that he had never known two happier people than Kate and her husband. He said that he had visited them on their ranch some two years ago for a month and they were the same old lovers that they were some 18 years ago.

In speaking of the long Sunday runs which many of the people thought tiresome, it was not so for all of them. Girls or boys, they were always with a good bunch of fellows as a rule. If they were exclusive the circus business or thought themselves better because they were a high class, high salaried performer, they would be very lonesome and without many friends. Many of the European performers found that out early in their first years traveling with the big circus in this country. There was one man that I knew in the business, the finest rider in the world, and he got it into his head early in the game that the only place for him was around the front part of the show among the managers. It was not long before everyone in the dressing room knew that he held his head above them, and although he was high class in the business and his services were always wanted with the largest and best shows in the country, yet he became of the show, and they did not want him at their elbow all the time. They were not long in telling him that he was a performer and belonged in the dressing room. So to be a good trouper with the circus you must keep smiling, keep your troubles to yourself, always attend strictly to your own business and do not bother about anything around the show that does not concern you. If everyone would follow this rule, a big family circus would not be a bad home.

There are questions of who will go to Havana, Cuba this winter and join the Pubillones circus. Mrs. Geraldine Pubillones, proprietress of the Pubillones circus in Cuba, was in New York all last week making her

headquarters at the office of Richard Pitrot, her New York representative. She has engaged many attractions for the coming season as she will have two big companies on the road. The season opened at the National Theater, Havana, on October 20th and following this engagement the companies will cover Cuba, Merida, Yucatan and Mexico City.

The way everything looks at present in headquarters for show people in Chicago, it would seem that many of them would be without work during the winter. Still further it is a question of how many of the big shows will be able to come out next year. It will surely be sad news to millions of youngsters all over the country who have always been saying: "Mama, the circus is coming next week; please can't we go?" Yet the conditions may change and make it possible for them all to go on the road again as in years gone by.

The other day in a certain headquarters in France, a French Poilu proudly greeted an American comrade with:

"You spik French?"

"Nope," answered the American, "not yet."

The poilu smiled complacently -

"Aye spik Engleesh," he said. The American grinned and the Frenchman looked about for some means to prove his boast. At that moment, a French girl, very prim and shapely in her boots, passed by. The Frenchman nodded his head at her, looked knowingly at the American and said triumphantly. "Chicken."

The American roared.

"Shake, old pal," he said, "You don't speak English. THAT'S AMERICAN."



November 2, 1918

Many years ago I had an old friend in Janesville who had spent practically all his life in railroad business and many times while visiting with him, he would tell me stories of dif-

ferent kinds that happened in his boyhood days at New Britain, Connecticut where he was born and raised. It was many years later that I received contracts from the advance agent of the Adam Forepaugh show and one of the towns in which we were to show some ten days ahead was New Britain. This brought to my mind many interesting stories that my old railroad friend had told me years before. I soon made up my mind that when we arrived in New Britain that I would be up bright and early and take a look at the old town which I had heard so much about. I was down to the hotel for the first breakfast in the morning and soon out on the streets to look the town over. There was one thing that New Britain, Connecticut had been famous for many years and that was the silverware works of the New Britannica Factory.

Just as I was to leave the hotel for a walk, I noticed an old gentleman drive up to the building opposite. The horse and the general make-up of the old gentleman's rig attracted my attention and I walked across the street and said to him: "I have always been an admirer of fine horses, and you certainly have as high a class one as I have ever seen in many a day." The old gentleman asked me if I belonged to the circus, and when I told him that I was the ticket agent and treasurer and that my home was in Janesville, Wisconsin, the old gentleman smiled and said: "I understand that is the home of one of the best writers on horse articles that I have ever read and he writes them under a fictitious name. But his real name is Mr. H. D. McKinney. I have met him several times at the big race meetings and have had very many interesting talks with him on the 'harness horse.'" I then told him that Mr. McKinney was an old friend of mine that was born and raised there, telling him many interesting stories of his boyhood days.

The old gentleman then turned to me and said: "My two sons run the business and as I have but little to do, I will give you a ride around the town. We will first go up and take a look at the great factory and after

that we win drive over to the fair grounds where there are many famous trotters and pacers, after which I will take you down to the show grounds." Shortly after we started out for our drive, one of the sons came and, knowing his father had been at the hotel, came in to inquire around the hotel and asked people if they had seen anything of him. The landlord told him that he had seen him driving away from the place early in the morning with a stranger who had taken breakfast there and he registered as "D. W. Watt" of Janesville, Wisconsin. This immediately excited the curiosity of the son who already made up his mind that the old gentleman had fallen into the hands of some confidence man that was following up the show.

He, therefore, immediately started out in pursuit of his father. He started out to strike our trail from the factory to the race grounds and from there he knew nothing about which direction we had gone, but some time between 10 and 11 o'clock, the son drove up to the ticket wagon where Adam

Forepaugh, his father and I had been visiting for some time. The son, who by this time was very excited said to his father: "What on earth are you doing here? I have been driving everywhere all over the town looking for you and have long since made up my mind that you had fallen into the hands of a confidence man, and I don't know but what you have." The father then said to him: "Eddie, I certainly have spent a very interesting morning visiting with this gentleman, Mr. Watt. We visited the factory and from there went to the fair grounds where we watched the trotters and pacers for more than an hour and a half, and I see no need of your getting worked up so over nothing." The son took one look at me and said: "Father, you don't know but this man 'Watt' is a confidence man, and neither do you know that this is Adam Forepaugh." I took one look at the young man and said to him: "For

the short experience that I have had in New Britain, I think I could find as many fools in New Britain as confidence men around the Adam Forepaugh show." I had already supplied his father with a half dozen reserved seat tickets for the afternoon show and in the afternoon a party of six, including the old gentleman and his wife, his son and wife, and a couple of friends came to the show. The old gentleman would not go into the show until they stopped at the ticket wagon and the son apologized for the way he greeted me in the morning. After the afternoon show was over the party of six came into the ticket wagon to find out how we did business and to see how I could possibly sell so many tickets, pay the bills, with two salaries during the week, and then strike the balance every Saturday night. This is only one of the stories of the happenings with the big circus while en route.



While showing in Omaha, Nebraska, shortly after the crowds had all gone into the show, one of the toughest looking men that I had ever seen in all my years, came up to the ticket wagon and wanted to know if he could get a job with the circus. He was a little more than 6 ft. in height; weight about 200 lbs; and had a face on him that betokened the rough life that he had lived. After I had sized him up from head to foot, I said to him that the boss canvasman, Dan Taylor, was a dozen or more men short and that he could get a job, but I said to him: "You don't look to me like you were tough enough to travel with the circus." Giving me a look from his slouch hat he said: "I have been a cattle rustler in Montana for two years after breaking as many bucking broncos as any man in the West, and I am not afraid to go anywhere." So I sent him around to ask for Dan Taylor, and Dan put him to work. But this man was looking for trouble more than he was for work, and in three or four days the boss canvasman, Taylor, and he came together and the tough man of the West came to the ticket wagon with a paper in

his hand which said, "Pay this man off." His nose was over to one side and his face was cut in a half dozen places. He said to me: "Dan Taylor is not a man; he is a brute." Well, said I, "Young man, you can't blame me for after sizing you up the day you asked for work, I was afraid you were not tough enough to travel with the circus." "I am not blaming anybody, but the brute of a Taylor and this experience is all that I want with the circus." The bad man from Montana came out as many of them did when they came around the circus looking for trouble rather than positions.

The Liberty loan drive was giving much spectacular interest during the closing hours by the circus and vaudeville performers who are laying off in Chicago on account of the influenza epidemic and the closing of the Ringling circus.

There were many actors and circus folk who plunged into this drive with a will to win. John Agee, equestrian director of the Ringling show, was generalissimo. Traffic was stopped at Clark and Monroe Streets, State and Madison and State and Monroe, where regular circus-vaudeville performances were given.

Lucille Cavanaugh, who is headliner at the Majestic and will be the headliner, tho laid off, until she completes her engagement, danced for the multitudes, yes, right out on the streets, high heels and all. She and her partner gave a real exhibition.

Irene Montgomery was doing her swinging ladder act just as though she was working under the big top. Oscar Lowande, principal and carrying act, was a busy performer. There were dozens of show folks and vaudeville people who did their bit to put this drive over, and they put that hurry-up pep into the drive which helped to put Chicago over the top.

November 9, 1918

It was in the fall of '64 that Adam Forepaugh came to Delavan, Wisconsin and purchased the Mabie show which at the time was one of the best in the country. Mr. Forepaugh drove the entire show across the country to Chicago and shipped it over the Pennsylvania Road to Philadelphia and the following spring after the show had been

rebuilt and much added to it, he started out from Philadelphia for the first time in his career as a showman. From that time on, until his death, Adam Forepaugh never had a partner, and with the exception of some two or three years, was manager of the show himself. He ran all the main privileges such as cook tent, side show, reserved seats and candy stands himself and after it was only a very few small privileges that were ever leased to outsiders.

In the spring of '82, which was my first year with the show, a man by the name of B. F. Keith came to Washington, D. C. and hired a privilege of Adam Forepaugh to run what was known as a "Lung Tester" in the sideshow. This was a device something like the face of a large clock with a hand pointing to figures running from 1 to 100 with a long rubber tube connection. In this tube patrons would blow and the hand would rise up and indicate as the manager said, "the strength of your lungs." If you could blow into this indicator so as to raise the hand above 50, you were supposed to have the best of lungs. Mr. Keith had with him a young man 21 or 22 years of age whose business it was to circulate around through the crowd in the side show soliciting patronage for the Lung Tester. As the price was but 5 cents Mr. Keith and his Lung Tester was a success from the very start.

Mr. Keith's helper's name was Eddie Albee and a more faithful worker was not to be found around the show. It was early in the season that Mr. Keith came to me and asked if it would be too much trouble if he got a larger express envelope with his name printed on it. When he got \$50 or \$100 to spare, he would put it in the envelope and give it to me to put in the safe so that he would have his money where he could get it in case of need.

The show went south that fall and closed the season late in Chattanooga, Tennessee on the 19th of November. Mr. B. F. Keith had made plans to go to Boston and open a dime museum. This he did, and in less than four weeks after the close of the show, Mr. Keith was doing business on one of the principal streets in Boston in a large store room 22 x 110

feet. He opened with not more than about half a dozen freaks, etc., and as the museum was only ten cents, and one of the first cheap shows that Boston had seen, it was a success from the start. It was only a few weeks until Mr. Keith leased a larger room over the main store, putting in a stairway leading up and built a stage in the back end of the hall where, in addition to his museum on the first floor, he inaugurated a vaudeville show which he advertised would run for just one hour and raised the admission fee to 15 cents for both shows. Yet with twice the room added the place was much too small to accommodate the people, and before the year was ended, Mr. Keith leased one of the old theaters in Boston which would accommodate something like 1,200 people. He was the first one to inaugurate a continuous vaudeville show opening at 10 a.m. and running until 11 p.m.



Only a few years later success had crowned his efforts to the extent that he built one of the finest of Boston's play houses, entrance to which was built underground and a block away from the main theater. His next move was to lease theaters in New York, Philadelphia, Providence, R. I. and up to the time of his death and even today the Keith circuit of theaters is known the world over and possibly the largest chain of theaters owned by any one man.

Mr. Keith's first wife died many years ago, and after some two years, he married again settling a large sum of money on his second wife. Upon Mr. Keith's death which occurred some two or three years after, he left his entire fortune to an only child, Paul Keith. The son, Paul, and Eddie Albee continued the business without any material change. Mr. Keith a few years before his death built a beautiful theater in

Providence, R. I. and presented it to his faithful manger, Eddie Albee, who started in the business with him with the Lung Tester and the sideshow of the Adam Forepaugh show.

On Tuesday of last week, Paul Keith, the only heir to the Keith millions died, and as he had no immediate relatives and after a few bequests, a large amount went to two or three Catholic institutions in which his mother had been interested. The balance of the estate which consisted of some three or four theaters and other business interests were all left to Eddie Albee, the faithful manager who had stayed by and worked hard and faithful for the Keith's interests for more than 36 years. This places Eddie Albee in the front rank as owners and managers of what is possibly the greatest theatrical circuit in the country. No difference how many millions, how much success Eddie Albee attained in the business, no one can help but say that he is entitled to it for he had put in all of the best years of his life for the Keiths' interests and he was the only one that Mr. Keith could always depend upon.

I have not seen Mr. Albee for many years, but his sister, who is married, lives in Mineral Point, Wisconsin, where he occasionally finds time to visit for a few days.

Eddie Albee was the same old zealous worker for his employer while soliciting patronage for the Lung Tester at 5 cents as he has been since, where thousands and thousands of dollars have been at stake. Many times B. F. Keith would send Eddie Albee to close up deals where large sums of money were involved. Many years ago a friend of Mr. Keith asked him why he turned large deals over to Albee to close up instead of himself. Mr. Keith simply smiled and said that he would send Albee where he would hesitate to go himself as Albee's judgment was the best in business transactions. Eddie Albee with his millions and his chain of beautiful theaters stand as a monument to what integrity and faithful service can accomplish.

Fred Gollmar, formerly of the Gollmar Brothers shows, who for the past season has been advance agent

and railroad contractor for the Hagenbeck-Wallace show, passed through Janesville last Monday on his way to West Baden, Indiana, the winter quarters of the Hagenbeck-Wallace show. Mr. Gollmar had no news to give out as to the prospects of the coming year, only that so far as he knew, all shows were going ahead and rebuilding and putting the show in shape for the coming season, just the same as they had always done heretofore.

In the course of a week or two I may be able to give you something of an idea of the prospects of the big shows and their plans for 1919.

November 16, 1918

As I look back over the years I spent with the Adam Forepaugh show, one of the most interesting places around the show was Adam Forepaugh's office. This constituted more than three-fourths of the ticket wagon and it was here that all the business during the year on the road was transacted, especially some two or three weeks in the spring and five or six weeks at the latter end of the season. With the exception of performers from foreign countries, their contracts all read with two weeks' notice. At the opening of the show if the act was not up to the standard Mr. Forepaugh would give them two weeks' notice to quit. As a rule, there were always two or three and even more that would receive their two weeks' notice at the opening of the show which was usually in Philadelphia. Business was always talked over in the ticket wagon by Adam Forepaugh, his son Adam, Jr. and the equestrian director. Many times I was asked to close up the wagon the first afternoon early and go in and take a look at the new acts, for if they were not up to the standard, the sooner they were dropped, the better for the show. The earlier in the season the better for them, for this gave them the chance to join the smaller shows and still get a season's work. While Adam Forepaugh was always ready to listen to his son, the equestrian director and myself as to our opin-

ion of the different acts, if he got his neck bowed, it was not easy to change him.

In the fall some five or six weeks before the closing of the show the same bunch would gather in the ticket wagon and talk over the different acts there were to be engaged for the next season. Many times while the acts of some of the people were good and would pass muster, so far as they were concerned, at times you would find them disagreeable and hard to get along with and disturbing in the dressing room of the big show where there are so many people, no difference how good their act may be. I have known them to lose out simply because they were troublemakers. In the early '80's four people were brought over from Europe, at that time, about the highest class acrobatic act that I had ever seen. Before the season was half over, they were finding fault with the way the show was running and were not slow in telling how such shows were run in the old country where they never had a show one-fourth as big as the Forepaugh show. Late in the season when the committee met in the ticket wagon to talk over the coming season, the equestrian director objected to this quartet being engaged, saying that they were trouble makers and he thought they could find another act that the public would like just as well and would be easier to get along with. Mr. Forepaugh said: "You are the one that is to blame, for you

The Al G. Barnes Circus advance advertising car.



should have called them down and given them to understand where they belonged and kept them there. You need not hurry about them leaving," said Mr. Forepaugh, "for I well know that I am paying them three or four times as much salary as they ever received in the old country, and it is the money that they are after. I am going to give them a contract for next year, and it is up to you to tell them where they belong and you want them to stay there, and so far as the running of the show is concerned, that will be left entirely to the management."

It was also in the office that the agents were such as directors, car managers, newspaper men, in fact, everybody ahead of the show. All misunderstandings with these men were settled there, and while all of these men had a certain amount of judgment of their own to use, when anything out of the ordinary came up, it was Adam Forepaugh who must be consulted before any steps were taken. Yet there never was a better show to travel with for the reason that Adam Forepaugh never had a partner and they only had one man to please. He was not a hard taskmaster if they were up to date and could deliver the goods.

A day or two ago I read the will of the late Paul Keith, the great theatrical manager of whom I told you last week, and it was certainly one of the best that I ever read. While he gave liberally to a few educational institutions, he did not overlook the faithful employees and remember them all according to the time of

their service and gave them all, say from \$1,000 to \$25,000 each, including stenographers, even his chauffeur was [given] real estate which was some four or five of the finest theaters in the country, he gave them all to Eddie Albee, the partner and manager for his father for so many years.

The Al G. Barnes circus which played here in August pulled into Dallas, Texas on sched-

ule October 13th, ready for exhibiting Monday, October 14th, but Dallas, like most other cities in the states, was dosed on account of influenza, so the worthy employer, the right honorable A. G. Barnes, gathered his brilliant advance agents from various points of the state, hitched his advance cars to a regular Pullman and he himself advanced into Venice, California. The troupe, in the charge of Manager Al Sands, made a six days journey via El Paso, where we took S. P. Routing, arriving in Venice Sunday, October 20th.

Auditor Alfred Wolffe paid up all salaried members and has been kept busy the past week settling bills in towns contracted, but not played. The performers have gone to their homes, although the St. Marks Hotel is housing a number of them.

W. J. Erickson, manager of advertising car No. 1, has revived from a severe attack of influenza, as has Mrs. Bob Fountain, the wife of the manager of the sideshow, while the writer can flirt deftly with the Corona keyboard after a slight attack of the same dreaded malady.

All hands were on deck October 27th to welcome Murray Pennock, the general agent, home. So all's well and waiting for words of assurance that the "Big Tops" will croupe next season.

One of the most valuable elephants of the Barnum & Bailey herd went on a rampage recently and is dead as the result. Pilot, considered one of the most perfect specimens in the country, commenced by attacking a smaller elephant and after a three-hour struggle, Harry J. Mooney succeeded in throwing the pachyderm by attaching chains and ropes to his hind legs. Exhaustion and rage at last caused the beast to succumb.

Since peace has been declared all the shows so far as I know are making preparations for the early opening in the spring and it is safe to say that they will be on the road next year, the same as of yore.

November 23, 1918

On Saturday and Sunday last the company that played two days' engagement at the Myers Opera House was under the management of Mr. F. H. Seymour, an old friend of

mine, who has put in just 30 years in circus business commencing with the Gollmar Brothers when it was a small wagon show. F. H. Seymour was with the Gollmar Brothers 17 or 18 years and for the past several years has had charge of the culinary department with the Hagenbeck-Wallace show, better known in circus business as the "cook tent."



Mr. Seymour gave me more of a detailed account of the terrible accident to the Hagenbeck-Wallace show in Indiana last summer. He, with his fifty cooks and waiters, were all on the first train which was sidetracked and out of danger when the collision came to the last section, but all the rest of the working people with the show were on the last section when the crash came. All the boys of the other department were either killed or injured so that it was impossible for them to come on to Beloit which was the first stand after the wreck. It seemed for a time that it would be impossible to get the show together and make the next stand as Mr. Seymour was the only one that was at the head of any department to take hold and say that the show was loaded and in shape to go until the next stand. Mr. Seymour had never loaded or unloaded a circus train in his life, knew nothing about where to take hold and yet it seemed that it was up to him, for he and Charles Gollmar, manager in charge, were the only ones left that knew what must be done and be done at once. The boss hostler was killed outright, the boss canvasman and the master of transportation were badly injured, and of the 160 canvasmen, less than half that number could be ready to service the next day. More than half of the old-time drivers were either killed or injured and Mr. Seymour said that everybody that was able to work, both men and women, did

everything that could be done for the dead and injured. Then they got the show together as best they could and came on to Beloit where they gave two creditable performances. Although in nearly all performances, more than half their people were gone, yet to look at the show, the general public could see but little, if any, changes. Mr. Seymour said that the show was being remodeled and rebuilt and would get out in the spring "bigger and better than ever before." He said to me: "Dave, if there was a braver man than Ed Ballard, the owner of the show, I have never seen him. He took his loss bravely and simply said to his men: 'All we can do is to go ahead and make the best of it.' I know of no business in the world that could come back so quick and keep on doing business under the same circumstances but the circus."

The terrible accident which happened at the home of Mrs. Augusta Lehmann on Saturday last causing her death, took me back many years in the show business, for it was there that the late E. J. Lehmann first got his start. For some years he was known as the privilege man, both in circus business and at country fairs. It was said at the time he started his little store in a frame building on the corner of State and Adams Streets that it was on account of his business with the different fairs in the country that the store was named "The Fair Store." This was in about '75 and at that time the late John Long, who was laid to rest in Mount Olivet Cemetery in Janesville some two years ago, was proprietor of the Star Theater on State Street in Chicago in the next block south of the present Fair Store on the opposite side of the street. It was said at the time that John Long was the silent partner in the Fair Store with Mr. Lehmann, but be this as it may, John Long and Mr. Lehmann were the closest of friends. Few, if any, stores in Chicago grew faster than the Fair Store and Mr. Lehmann soon became the power, both in a business way and politically, and one of the strongest recommends that any young man could have was that E. J. Lehmann "was your friend."

It was Friday in 1884 that the

Forepaugh show was exhibiting in Peru, Indiana and the following Monday was to open a two weeks' engagement on the lake front in Chicago. Up to that time no show under canvas was allowed to show on the lakefront on Sunday. In the morning I spoke to Mr. Forepaugh and told him that I could get away from the show for a day or two and go into Chicago and see E. F. Lehmann and get a permit to open the sideshow on the lake front Sunday. Mr. Forepaugh told me to take the first train to Chicago and see what I could do. The next morning which was Saturday, I went to Mr. Lehmann's office in the Fair Store and told him what I wanted, and he immediately called a hack and we visited the two aldermen of the ward and in less than two hours, I sent a telegram to Mr. Forepaugh stating that everything was okay.

In those days it made no difference whether we were showing on the lakefront, the Lehmann family, when it was possible for them, attended the show. The children (Lehmann children) were all small and it was possibly 15 years or more later before I knew anything about the Lehmann family. While in Chicago one day with a little time to spare, I dropped into the Fair Store and asked the floorwalker if the Lehmann boys were in their office. He took me to the elevator and told me where I could find them on the 5th floor. As the boys had grown to manhood since I had known anything of them, they did not know me. When I told them who I was, I received a warm welcome as they said that they had often heard their father speak of me. But little did E. J. Lehmann think when he started his little Fair Store in the middle 70's that it would ever grow to be one of the largest, if not the largest, in the world of its kind. Up to the time of his death, there were but few people, if any, that would go deeper into their pockets to help an old friend over a rough road than E. J. Lehmann.

It was characteristic of Mrs. Augusta Lehmann, widow of E. J. Lehmann, founder of the Fair Store, that her last act before the accident which resulted in her death, should have been a charitable one inspired

by patriotism. Mrs. Lehmann died at her home at 2748 Lake View Avenue from injuries suffered Thursday when she was crushed by an elevator in her home. She had just pledged a subscription to the United War Work fund and had started to ascent to another floor to get her purse to pay it when the accident happened. She was caught between the automatic elevator and the wall and was found hanging head downward. It was necessary to chop through a wall to rescue her.

November 30, 1918

The latest news from Bridgeport, Connecticut, the winter quarters of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus is that the headliners on the billboards the coming season will read: "Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Shows combined." This, I think will mean that only the larger cities of the country will be taken and that the excursion agents will make an effort to get rates cheap enough to bring the mass of people to a greater distance than heretofore.



Tex Rickard (1870-1929)

It was in 1889 that P. T. Barnum and his wife came on to Adam Forepaugh's show for a week visit, yet the real object of his coming was to try and combine the Barnum & Bailey show with the Adam Forepaugh show and to get excursion rates from the railroads for hundreds of miles around and to show in cities like New York, Philadelphia, Boston

and, in fact, all of the larger cities making their stay several times longer than usual. This, Mr. Barnum thought, would save railroad transportation and give people cheap excursion rates, but Adam Forepaugh simply shook his head and said: "Nothing doing, I have put in the best of my life in show business with but one name, 'Adam Forepaugh,' on the billboards and I am too old to take in a partner now."

The combined Ringling and Barnum & Bailey shows will certainly make up a show worth going miles and miles to see.

Tex Rickard, the erstwhile well-known prizefighter and amusement promoter, now cattle king, returned from South America last week and, incidentally, brought with him a magnificent live souvenir of his hunting expedition along the Paraguay River near his cattle ranch which consists of many thousands of acres. The trophy is a fine, large specimen of the female South American tiger most beautifully marked and was brought to the states by Rickard for the express purpose of presenting it to John Ringling. Upon being notified by Mr. Rickard that the beautiful beast awaited his disposal, Mr. Ringling was most agreeably surprised and immediately arranged its shipment to winter quarters at Bridgeport, Connecticut.

In commenting on the catch Rickard stated that he and his cowboys had caught two by means of a trap made entirely of rope, but one of them gnawed the rope and escaped. Outside the presentation of the tiger to Mr. Ringling, Mr. Rickard announced no purpose in his return to the United states, merely remarking that, as he felt positive the war was nearly ended, he wanted to be here in time for the celebration.

In a big war drive pageant at Bridgeport, Connecticut. November 9th, nearly all the horses, several floats and the calliope of the Barnum & Bailey shows took part. Another war fund drive event of interest was held in Bridgeport November 16th when the police of the city presented a Wild West. The management of the

B & B again granted the use of its stock. Several members of the show who are spending the winter there also took part. Herman Joseph did his Jew Comedy. Herman also put on a few clown numbers assisted by the well know "Joeys," Harry Clemings and George Zammert, also of B & B fame. All of the receipts of the event went to the war funds.

When it comes to advertising it certainly takes a circus press agent to put it on as but few others could on account of their long experience in the business and their varied way of advertising.

The following letter tells of how Lieut. Wells Hawks,' the circus press agent, work was appreciated: Washington, D. C., Nov. 47th, 1918. Lieut. Wells Hawks, U.S.N. Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department Washington, D. C. "My Dear Hawks: Now that the excitement of the Navy's Fourth Liberty Loan Campaign has abated I have a chance to write and express my thanks for everything you did to help us out I know of no one in the entire service who was more helpful in the campaign than you were. From the very start of the drive I could always count upon you to do whatever was in your power.

"I am indebted to you for the posters you had printed for us, for your aid in getting Lieut. Reuterdaahl to paint our signs, for the motion pictures that you took and for a great many other things which brought big results.

"I believe you will be interested to learn that the Navy subscription is nearly \$46,000,000, and I expect it to go even higher. I can say that no man in the service is more responsible for a greater share of that total than you. (Signed) T. J. Cowle, Rear Admiral, U.S.N. Navy Liberty Loan Officer."

T. P. Convey, who put on the big Toy Land and Christmas Tree celebration at the Coliseum, Chicago, last year, is right on the job again for this season and has leased the Coliseum for fourteen days from December 11th to 24th inclusive, contracted with John R. Agee to put on his tent act circus and to take charge of all the entertainment. He is also

with a number of other attractions for the amusement of young and old during the celebration.

The wonderful success that Mr. Convey made with this venture last year when conditions were not anything like as good as they are now (we were then at war, but have now won a great victory and everyone is in a receptive mood for jollifications of all kinds) should make this year one that will be long remembered and set the high water mark for a real old-fashioned Christmas.

The circus will be free this year,



the same as last and special days will be arranged for the various nationalities, the orphans and crippled children. Santa

Claus will be on the job and all the kiddies will be remembered with a present. These are just a few of the plans now underway. By next week all the arrangements will be completed and full details can be given. It is safe to say that this will be one of the biggest and best events ever staged at the Coliseum and under the able management of Mr. Convey, its success is assured before the doors even open. The attendance last year was about 200,000 so under present conditions, it should go away ahead of the figure last year.

December 7, 1918

Looking back for years and yet not so many, much less than half my lifetime, I think of the great shows that were on the road that time and the owners made themselves famous the world over and made millions and millions of dollars. Today all those great shows are to house at Bridgeport, Connecticut, which has been the winter quarters of the great

Barnum show for more than three (sic) score years. If the present plans of the Ringling Brothers are carried out, it looks as though there will be but one great show on the road the coming season.

It was back in the '80s that the W. W. Cole show had been known to be the dangerous rival of the great Barnum & Bailey show and it was James A. Bailey that conceived the idea of buying the Cole show and consolidating it with the Barnum & Bailey and to turn the management of the great shows over to Mr. Cole.

This was done, and the best part of the Cole show was consolidated with the Barnum & Bailey. Mr. Cole received a certain amount of money in cash and a certain amount of stock in the great Barnum & Bailey show. This was not the first consolidation with the Barnum show, but several years prior to this, the Cooper show which was the first show to make a tour around the world was consolidated with the Barnum show with James

A. Bailey as its manager. The partners at that time were P. T. Barnum and James A. Bailey and James E. Cooper and J. Hutchinson. Then came the consolidation of the Cole show with W. W. Cole as the first manager, but this only lasted for a short time for Mr. Cole made up his mind that he would retire from the business and sold out to the other partner.

On January 24th [1890], Adam Forepaugh passed away and in his will he provided that the show must be sold to the highest bidder and the proceeds to be divided equally between the widow and his only child, Adam Forepaugh, Jr. It was then that James A. Bailey of the Barnum show and J. Cooper, who a few years prior to this had retired, bought the Adam Forepaugh show and for several years it was run under the name of "Forepaugh" until the death of the last one of the famous Sells Brothers. This put another big circus and menagerie in the hands of the administrator to close out at auction which was done at their winter quarters in Columbus, Ohio.

The famous circus men were there to attend the sale, and it was the Ringling Brothers that purchased the Sells Brothers show and then James A. Bailey and Ringlings; consolidated the Adam Forepaugh show and the Sells Brothers and the following season it was stated out as the "Adam Forepaugh and Sells Brothers combined." Some few years later P. T. Barnum died and his interest in the show went to J. A. Bailey and only a few years later James A. Bailey passed away. This put another great show on the market to pass into the hands of new owners. It was then that the Ringlings made an offer which after a short time was accepted. This put all the big famous shows into the hands of the Ringling brothers, and while to the general public, there are but two shows wintering at the famous Barnum winter quarters at Bridgeport, Connecticut, and yet to one who has followed the game and kept track of the passing of the different ones, there are six of the world's famous shows under one roof at Bridgeport, Connecticut, and to be owned and managed by the Ringling Brothers. [Virtually all historical statements in this and the preceding paragraphs are incorrect.]

As the Hagenbeck-Wallace show is advertising to be sold at auction within the next thirty days, this would look as though the country would see but one great show the coming season. On account of the retirement of the Hagenbeck-Wallace and of the closing of the year, I would think it might be possible for the Ringling Bros. to reconsider their present plans and start out the Barnum and the great Ringling show in the same manner as they have been managed in the past. For it would seem to me that there will be a demand the country over for at least two great shows in 1919.

It was just 40 years ago that the Burr Robbins show had opposition with the old Van Amburgh show in Michigan. It was owned and managed by Gerry Ferguson and Hyatt Frost. Its winter quarters were Connorsville, Indiana and at that time was the wagon show of considerable size. After we got there out the opposition was with Howe's Great London show, one of the finest of its

CHICAGO, FRIDAY, APRIL 28 1882.

ON THE LAKE FRONT.

**The Big United States
Circus and Menagerie**

AND THE

**New Great Eastern
COMBINED,**

WILL OPEN

**Saturday Afternoon and Night,
APRIL 29,**

And Exhibit Every Afternoon
and Night of

May 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6,

ON THE LAKE FRONT.

**GRAND
ILLUMINATED PROCESSION
FRIDAY NIGHT.**

Route of Procession

Leaves Lake Front at 8 o'clock p. m.,

A 1882 ad for the Big United States Circus in Chicago.

size. After we got there our problem was two twin brothers, Egbert and Elbert Howes. But we soon got out of the way of the Great London show and for the balance of the season had clear sailing. As Burr Robbins was the man who was out for the dollars, he did not believe in opposition if it was possible for the show to get out and always said that there was plenty of country and would get out of the way as soon as possible. But one of these great shows fell by the way and it looks as though next season there will be but few on the road.

The B.P.O.E. of New York is planning to very shortly repeat its indoor society circus success of last season. In fact the Board of Governors are figuring on a program this winter that promises to quite completely eclipse last season's efforts in the line

of public entertainment.

The entertainment committee, of which Martin Gorry is the executive head, has contracted for a program of talent that will be booked out of the offices of Perry & Gorman 1500 Broadway, New York City, and in turn are going to offer for the delectation of Elksdom their indoor tent show revue, "Circus Land," which is scheduled to begin a tour of the U. S. Government Liberty Theater Circuit on December 15 at Camp Merritt.

It is expected that practically all the attractions booked for the cantonment tour will be seen in action at the Elks big doings and which in reality will be a sort of dress rehearsal for the regular Camp Merritt opening.

The event is to open on December 11 and continue for three nights.

December 14, 1918

It was back in the middle seventies that a young man by the name of Mike Toben entered the employ of Hodge & Buchholz in this city. It was there that young Toben started to learn the blacksmith trade and the part that pertained to him was the ironing of fine carriages and cages for the Burr Robbins circus. It was not long until young Toben was considered one of the best workmen in the country in his line of work, and his services were in demand wherever he was known.

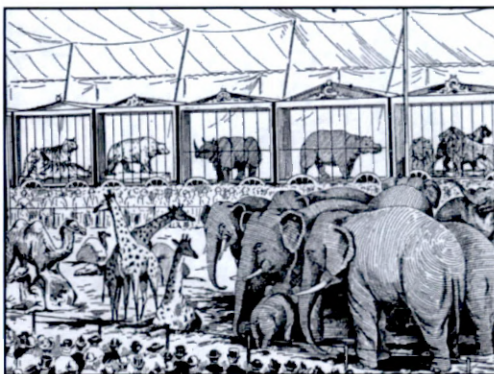
In the winter of 1881-82 Burr Robbins sold his show to two men named Myers and Shorb, who changed the name to the "Big United States Show" and ambitiously commenced building new cages and remodeling the show for the coming year. It was in this capacity that young Toben made himself famous in his line of work. As these men were now in the business and had to have a blacksmith with the show during the summer season, the only man that seemed to look good to them was Mike Toben. They immediately commenced talking to him and asked him to travel with them during the season of 1881 to look after all the blacksmith work that was necessary to be done with the show. The idea was a new one to young Toben who, for some time, did not look with favor upon the idea of traveling with the

circus, but the salary offered him was more than he was receiving and all his expenses were to be paid while on the road. While Herman Buchholz, manager of the carriage works here, was anxious to keep young Toben, he said to him: "Mike, if you think you would rather put in the winter with the show, go ahead and your position will be open to you anytime when you see fit to return."

The show left here the latter part of April and started southeast, expecting to travel through the eastern country most of the season, but encountered bad weather during the early part of the season and along about the middle of July went to Louisville, Kentucky, where it disbanded. Burr Robbins, who had a mortgage on it, stepped in and took charge of it.

The Adam Forepaugh show which I was with that season opened at the same time in Cincinnati, Ohio [actually Philadelphia] for a four days' engagement, and Burr Robbins, after taking charge of the "Big United Show," started to remodel it and started out for himself with a wagon show. He had no one connected with the show who knew as much about it as I did, and shortly after our arrival in Cincinnati with the Forepaugh show, a messenger boy came to the ticket wagon and handed me a letter which he said he wanted me to answer right away. It was from Burr Robbins, who was stopping at a hotel there and wanted me to come and see him and learn if it would be possible for me to leave the Forepaugh show there and help him to take on his old show; to sign a contract for the next season and that he would give me more money than I ever received in the show business. I simply answered the letter, saying I would meet him at the hotel at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and talk it over.

As soon as the Chicago papers announced the failure of the show at Louisville, Herman Buchholz telephoned Mike Toben to come to Janesville at once, as they were in need of his services. He came back and took up his old position and a little later left the employ of Hodge & Buchholz and entered the employ of the late Adam Wilson on River Street. Some time later he left the



Wilson shop and he and a son of Mr. Wilson went west and finally settled in Huron, South Carolina where they established themselves in business. From that time on Mike Toben's business grew rapidly, later buying young Wilson's share in the business. Mike Toben not only established a good business, but also has always been one of the prominent men of the west, having been elected to the state senate several times and for some years has been one of the directors of the Dakota State Fair.

Last week Mr. Toben attended the cattle show in Chicago and Thursday evening came to Janesville to spend a few days with relatives and friends of his boyhood days. About the time Mr. Toben left Janesville he married Miss Emma Higgins of this city, a sister of Albert Higgins of the town of Harmony.

After spending many years of his life in Janesville, the first one he inquired about was his old friend in the circus business. He said the circus had left the greatest impression on his mind of anything he had ever done. When I asked him why he did not stick to the circus business, he simply said: "Dave, in my line of work there did not seem to be much of a future, and yet I never spent a pleasanter summer in my life that I did with the show where I met so many nice people. You recollect George Fursman and his wife Georgina. These people you know had charge of all the privileges, including the cook tent, and many times Mrs. Fursman would come around when I was eating breakfast and say, 'Well, Mike, how is the breakfast this morning?' Everyone connected with the show was so nice to me that it seemed like one big family, one always ready to help the

other. Never since my few months in the circus business have I missed a show that came within a reasonable distance of Huron."

Mr. Toben is like thousands of others who have traveled in the circus business, whether for a few months or a few years; it has, as a rule, left a lasting impression on them that they never could forget. Even back in the days of the wagon show, when it was work all day and travel all night, many people followed the business year after year. They went through hardships that they would not think of going through in any other line of work, usually in the spring and late fall, when cold rains and deep mud made it almost impossible to get from town to town and arrive in time to give two performances.

You would think after one experience of this kind it would be the last season many of the men would continue in this line of work, and yet the next spring, long before time for starting out, 90 percent of them, known as "oldtimers," would always be on hand. It could not have been the music or the excitement or the travel that lured them to the business, for if the music was ever so near and the playing ever so loud the average person connected with the show never seemed to hear it, and yet for the excitement to them it meant nothing. It was their work that they took an interest in and that was all they thought of. In the circus business, with the average people, there is always something to lure them back for another year. Many times in bad weather and when there was plenty of hard work, you would hear many of the old-timers say, "There is no use of talking. This will be my last season in the business." But the following spring almost every man would show up at the ticket wagon and ask me to put them on the payroll for another season. With the Barnum & Bailey and Ringling Bros. circuses today, there are many old-timers that have spent more than half their lives in the business. It will not be long after the first of January that these men will commence to get ready for the coming season at the winter quarters of these shows.

BANDWAGON

THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Vol. 49, No. 6

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2005

FRED D. PFENING, JR.

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

Fred D. Pfening III, Managing Editor

Bandwagon, The Journal of the Circus Historical Society, Inc. (USPS 406-390) (ISSN 0005-4968), is published bi-monthly by the Circus Historical Society, Inc., 1075 West Fifth Ave., Columbus, OH 43212-2691. Periodicals Postage Paid at Columbus, OH. Postmaster: Send address changes to Bandwagon, 1075 West Fifth Ave., Columbus, OH 43212-2691.

Editorial, advertising and circulation office is located at 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, OH 43221. Phone (614) 294-5361. Advertising rates are: Full page \$100, half page \$60, quarter page \$35. Minimum ad \$25.

Bandwagon, new membership and subscription rate: \$42.00 per year in the United States; \$46.00 per year in Canada and outside United States. Single copies \$4.00 plus \$2 postage. Please direct all concerns regarding address changes and lack of delivery to the editor.

CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC. <http://circushistory.org>. Al Stencell, President, 15 Lark St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4L-3M5; Robert F. Sabia, Vice President, 3100 Parkside La., Williamsburg, VA 23185; Alan Campbell, Secretary-Treasurer, 600 Kings Peak Dr., Alpharetta, GA 30022-7844.

Trustees: Alan Campbell, 600 Kings Peak Dr., Alpharetta, GA 30022-7844. Fred Dahlinger, Jr., 451 Roblee Rd., Baraboo, WI 53913; John McConnell, 1 Skyline Dr., Morristown, NJ 07960; Fred D. Pfening, Jr., 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, OH 43221; Fred D. Pfening III, 1075 W. Fifth Ave., Columbus, OH 43212; Dave Price, 1954 Old Hickory Blvd., Brentwood, TN 3702; John F. Polacsek, 5980 Lannoo, Detroit, MI 48236; Richard J. Reynolds III, 1186 Warrenhall Lane N.E., Atlanta, GA 30319; Robert F. Sabia, 3100 Parkside La., Williamsburg, VA 23185; Al Stencell, 15 Lark St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4L-3M5. Trustee Emeritus: Stuart L. Thayer.

THE FRONT COVER

The modern Christmas card was invented in England in 1843, and became popular in America by the 1870s. While the origins of the corporate Christmas card are obscure, it appears field shows started using them about 1900. Printed by Weiners Ltd. in London, this Buffalo Bill Wild West card, one of the earliest known, dates from 1903 to 1906 while the show was in Europe. William F. Cody, of course, is the star of the card as he was in life, but note that part-owner James A. Bailey's and his executives' images are positioned above the great man's. Pfening Archives.

NEW MEMBERS

John B. Dever 4410
P. O. Box 130
Annadale, VA 22003-0130

Richard G. Shalhoub 4411
150 Charles St.
Boston, MA 02114-3253

William L. Geren 4412
1105 Hillary Ave.
Burlington, IA 52601-3442

Armand Fields 4413
5038 Pickfords Way
Culver City, CA 90230-4916

REINSTATED

Richard P. Hamilton 4120
166 Whitman Rd.-Hancock
Williamstown, MA 01267-9720

Peta Tait 4373
LaTrobe University & Drama Dept.
Victoria 3085, Australia

CHS ELECTION RESULTS

CHS election commissioner Guy J. Florenza certifies the following,
For directors:
Fred D. Pfening III 162
Richard J. Reynolds III 156

BACK ISSUES OF BANDWAGON

1966-Jan.-Feb.
1967-Nov.-Dec.
1968-All but Jan.-Feb.
1969-July-Aug., Sept.-Oct.
1970-All but July-Aug., Sept.-Oct.
1971-All but Mar.-Ap., May-June.
1972-All available.
1973-All but Nov.-Dec.
1974-All but Mar.-Ap., May-June.
1975-All available.
1976-All but Jan.-Feb., Nov.-Dec.
1977-All but Mar.-Ap.
1978-All available.
1979-All but Jan.-Feb.
1980-1986-All available.
1987-All but Nov.-Dec.
1988-2004-All available.

In addition to above many other issues are available going back to the 1950s. If you are in need of early issues write to the Editor.

Price is \$4.00 each. Add \$2.00 postage for one issue, \$5.00 for more than one issue. Please select substitutes in case we are out of any of above.

BANDWAGON BACK ISSUES
2515 DORSET RD.
COLUMBUS, OH 43221

Al Stencell 159

Judith Griffin 154

Alan Campbell 156.

Write-Ins

Fred Dahlinger 3; Richrd Flint 2;
Bob MacDougall, Fred Pfening Jr.,
John Polacsek, John W. Pugh, Robert
F. Sabia and Bill Schreiber 1 vote
each.

SEASON REVIEW

As usual the season's review will be published in the March-April *Bandwagon*. Your help is needed with photos and information of circuses that played in your area. Information and photos are especially needed of Mexican shows, Bentley Bros., UniverSoul and Gopher Davenport's two shows.

Send your material to the Editor.

My asociaton with the *Bandwagon* started in 1961.
Since then 265 issues of the magazine have come out of my base-
ment.

Season's Greetings
Fred D. Pfening, Jr.

(Sorry about being late with this big issue.)

RINGLING
BROS. ^{AND}



BARNUM
& BAILEY

HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!

VISIT US 365 DAYS A YEAR AT
Ringling.com

